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BANTU WISDOM-LORE

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A. Introductory

According to Krappe¹ the Science of Folk-lore covers fairy tales, merry tales, animal tales, legends, sagas, proverbs, folk-songs, popular ballads, spells, riddles and all the lore concerning plants, animals and natural phenomena, and has its bearing upon superstition, magic, myth and religion, custom and ritual. A term of very wide application indeed.

Here we are concerned with folk-lore strictly in its application to the oral literature of the Bantu, and in this we shall find it much more restricted in its forms. Duff Macdonald² divided the "traditional literature of the Nyasaland area" under four heads: (i) *Ndawi*, conundrums, (ii) *Ndano*, tales, (iii) *Nyimbo*, songs, and (iv) *Itagu*, catch-word compositions. It is difficult to understand how he missed classifying the proverbs (in Yao *ngani* and sometimes *itagu*) which are such an important and universal part of the traditional literature of every Bantu language.

For the purpose of this study we shall therefore apply the term "folk-lore" to the oral traditional literature of the Bantu as exemplified broadly in:

- (i) the wisdom-lore of proverbs and riddles,
- (ii) the traditional songs and praises for various occasions, and
- (iii) the folk tales, merging into myths and traditions of various types.

Naturally there will be a certain amount of overlapping in this classification; at times songs and praises are aphoristic in character, and might be considered as applying to the wisdom-lore; again praises and traditions often cut across one another, while many folk tales contain song elements, and some are hardly distinguishable from elaborated aphorisms. On the other hand certain languages exhibit special phenomena, hardly catered for in the above division, such as the song-riddles of Makua, the place-name couplets of Luba, the conundrum stories of Ila, the sand-graph stories of Luchazi and the pot-graphs of Zulu, in which two last the germ of writing seems to be observable. Despite this, the three-fold division, of aphorism, song and tale, provides a framework within which the folk literature of Bantu may well be considered.

The term "wisdom-lore" is here used for what are covered in a Bantu language by two distinct terms, translated generally by "proverb" and "riddle" respectively. Naturally there are gradations with each of these, though the riddle takes a more-or-less stereotyped form in each language. It will also be noticed how close a connection there is between the "proverb" and what might be termed the "idiom".

The following are examples of the Bantu terminology used for these two aspects of wisdom-lore:

In Zulu a "proverb" is *isaga* or *isiga* (sometimes *isisho*) and a "riddle" *impicabadala*, in Sotho *leele* (pl. *maele*, wisdom) and *selotho*, in Lamba *icisimpi* or *icisimi* and *icityoneko*, in Swahili

¹ A. H. Krappe, *The Science of Folk-lore* (Methuen, 1930).

² in his *Africana*, Vol. I., p. 47.

methali and *kitendawili*, in Nyanja *ntanu* and *mwambi*, in Ganda *olugero* and *ekikokko*, in Luba *lushiminyinyu* and *dialu*, in Kongo *kingana* and *ngwala*, in Herero *omuano* and *ehakero*, in Tsonga *šivuriso* and *šitekatekisana*.

But the Bantu terminology is not all so exact as the above would seem to indicate. There is not always a clear mental distinction between the fable, the proverb and the riddle. For instance in Nyanja the term *mwambi* is used for a "story" as well as a "riddle" and a "proverb", while *ntanti* and *ntanu* each mean "story, custom, proverb". In Ganda *olugero* is defined as "saying, story, proverb, parable", so that we find that Kagwa's book of folk-tales and Duta's book of proverbs both have the same title *Engero za Baganda*. Similar dual significances of terms are found in Luba, where Morrison defines *lushiminyinyu* or *lusumuinu* as "fable, parable, folk-lore, legend, story, saying, proverb, tale, illustration, example"; in Kongo where Bentley defines *kingana* as "story, tale, folk-lore, legend, saying, proverb, fable, parable, allegory, anecdote, pun"; and in Ila, where Smith defines *kalabi* as "riddle, fable, folk-tale".

Despite this vagueness of terminology there is no difficulty in differentiating between the general divisions of folk tale, proverb and riddle in Bantu.

B. Bantu Aphorisms

I. TERMINOLOGY

The term "proverb" is too restricted, however, for this section of Bantu wisdom-lore. The literary forms included bear features referred to in a number of English terms; but this fact does not justify any subdivision of classification for all have an inherent unity of purpose and signification. Probably the term *aphorism* is the one most applicable in Bantu. It may be defined as "a short, pithy sentence expressing some general truth or sentiment". Some aphorisms may be regarded as "maxims", when they embody a moral or practical precept sanctioned by experience; some are certainly "saws," wise sayings *par excellence*; some, from their long-established

authority and universal application, might be termed "adages"; while some are certainly "axioms", self-evident, universally accepted truths.

In Bantu, as in all languages, aphorisms are characterised by terseness of expression, an economy of words with much left to implication, and by traditional popular acceptance. To a great extent aphorisms are couched in figurative speech and abound in metaphor. What is stated regarding one subject or object is, in the true aphorism, applicable as a general principle to quite another set of circumstances. As Westermarck³ observes, there are few aphorisms that do not, in their form, somehow or other, differ from ordinary speech. This question of form is an important one, from the literary standpoint, and will be discussed presently.

One of the most striking things about aphorisms is the similarity both of form and sentiment which they exhibit in all languages, whether European, Asiatic or African; and in Africa this similarity is observed with remarkable clearness whether they are Bantu⁴ or Sudanic⁴ or Hamitic⁵ or of Semitic origin⁶.

II. THE BACKGROUND OF THE BANTU APHORISM

There are various possible origins for individual Bantu aphorisms, for some have come into being with certain folk-tales, others in known poems. Lestrade refers⁷ to the aptitude the Bantu have for conveying abstract ideas effectively and picturesquely in such idiomatic phrases as the Zulu: *ukudla ngengxwembe endala*, to eat with an old-fashioned spoon, i.e. to hold to an old-fashioned custom; or *uyisifuba sami*, he is my chest, i.e. my confidential friend; or *ukukhuluma ngamlomo-mbili*, to speak with double mouth, i.e. to dissimulate; or in the Southern

³ E. Westermarck, *Wit and Wisdom in Morocco*, p. 2.

⁴ See G. Herzog's *Jabo Proverbs from Liberia*.

⁵ See A. C. Hollis, *The Masai, their Language and Folklore*, and *The Nandi, their Language and Folklore*.

⁶ See the Moorish proverbs collected by Westermarck in Morocco.

⁷ Cf. G. P. Lestrade, "Traditional Literature", ch. xiii of *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 304.

Sotho idioms: *a nkena hanong*, he entered my mouth, i.e. interrupted me; *ba mo lomile tsebe*, they have bitten his ear, i.e. they have informed him on the sly; *seatla-kobong*, the hand in the cloak, i.e. a bribe. This fruitful field of Bantu idiom, however, shews such close parallel with the aphorism that a study of this reveals a mental background from which one could well imagine the aphorism to have risen. A similar parallel may be shewn with English proverbs; for instance the well-known proverb "It is no use crying over spilt milk" or "Don't cry over milk spilt" has its succinct idiomatic form "to cry over spilt milk". In just the same way the Lamba idiom *ukupāpāla kwēnsiku*, the chipping off of the days, is paralleled in the aphorism: *Tūmfwe, wemwānice, insiku sila-pāpāla*, Listen, child, the days chip off, i.e. don't make fun of an old man. Or, the idiom *ukumina amate*, to swallow spittle, and *Kōminā 'mate*, *ukulaŵila niwe kubwene*? Swallow spittle, is it you that the talk has seen? i.e. don't monopolise the conversation. Similar instances come from Zulu: *ukushelwa ngamanzi*, to have the water dried up round one, and the aphorism, *Inhlanzi ishelwe ngamanzi*, the fish has the water dried up round him, i.e. he is left stranded, all hope has left him.

With the existence of such parallels, a consideration of Bantu metaphorical idioms must be a necessary preliminary to the formal study of the aphorisms. The number of verbs in any Bantu language with idiomatic usages is limited. Some of the most fruitful are those meaning "strike" (Zulu *hlaŵa* and *shaya*, Xhosa *ŵetha*, Lamba *pama*, Swahili *piga*), "catch" (Zulu *ŵamba*, Lamba *ikata*, Swahili *shika*, Nyanja, *gwira*), "cut" (Zulu *nquma*, Swahili *kata*, Lamba *pinika*), "eat" (Zulu *dla*, Swahili *la*, Nyanja *dia*, Shona *dya*, Lamba *lya*).

Taking as illustration the first of these, the basic meaning of *hlaŵa* in Zulu is "stab", e.g. *hlaŵa ngomkhonto* (stab with a spear) but more than 30 idiomatic usages of this verb have been recorded, for example *hlaŵa ihele* (go in single file), *hl. ikhono* (feel pleasure), *hl. inhlanga* (brand), *hl. iphika* (take a breather), *hl. ngamehlo* (fix with the eyes), *hl. ikhwelo* (whistle), *hl. igama* (strike up a tune). Similar idioms are found with Zulu *shaya*

basically meaning "strike", e.g. *shaya isithutha* (make out a fool), *sh. ihele* (form in ranks), *sh. phansi* (fail), *sh. ithwaŵi* (have hiccups). The equivalent of this in Xhosa is *ŵetha* and we notice among others *ŵetha umlozi* (whistle), *ŵ. ngendlela* (take the road), *ŵ. phansi* (miss the point), and in the passive *ŵethwa ŵuthongo* (be overcome by sleep), *ŵ. livuso* (be smitten with fear). The Lamba *pama* "strike" gives *pama insima* (cook a lot of porridge), *p. imisowa* (wail), *p. umwima* (make an outcry). Swahili *piga*, too, is very extensively used as an idiomatic verb, e.g. *piga bomba* (work a pump), *p. pasi* (iron clothes), *p. kinanda* (play an instrument), *p. fundo* (tie a knot), *p. kelele* (shout), *p. mluzi* (whistle), *p. makuu* (play the grandee), and so on, about 50 such examples being given in the *Standard Swahili-English Dictionary*.

For "catch" we have in Zulu *ŵamba* giving such metaphorical idioms as *ŵ. umlomo* (be amazed, lit. grasp the mouth), *ŵ. indlela* (go on one's way), *ŵ. umzimba* (put on flesh). In Lamba *ikata* gives *i. imilimo* (enter work), *i. ifisēpo* (bear fruit), *i. umutima* (have self-control). In Swahili *shika* gives *s. njia* (take to the road), *s. amri* (obey an order), *s. bei* (haggle over a price), *s. lako* (mind your own business). In Nyanja *gwira* gives *g. nchito* (work) and in the passive *gwidwa ndi moa* (be drunk), *g. ndi mimba* (get diarrhoea).

For "cut", Zulu *nquma* gives *nq. indaba* (decide an affair), *nq. kabili* (place crosswise), while *nquma ulimi* (cut the tongue) gives the proverbial meaning of "interrupt", and *nquma amakhanda* (cut off the heads) is used aphoristically of relating the main facts. Swahili *kata* provides many idioms, e.g. *k. maji* (go upstream), *k. njia* (take a short cut), *k. nguo* (buy a piece of cloth), *k. maneno* (decide a case), *k. tamaa* (be desperate). Similarly with Lamba *pinika*, *p. umulandu* means "give judgment".

For "eat", we notice Zulu *dla* with *dl. indaba* (enjoy a talk), *dl. ifa* (inherit), *dl. imali* (cheat), *dl. inyanga* (pass a month). Swahili *la* gives *l. fedha* (cost money), *l. siku nyingi* (take many days). Nyanja *dia* gives *d. dziko* (devour the land), *d. fodia* (smoke tobacco), *d. chuma* (buy beads), *d. ntawi* (spend time), *d. mseche* (slander), *d.*

mirandu (incur debts). Shona *dya* gives *d. mari* (be expensive).

Crabtree, in his *Manual of Luganda* devotes several pages to the idiomatic use of verbs in Ganda, noticeable among which are *dda* (return), *fa* (die), *kuba* (strike) and *lya* (eat).

Similar metaphorical idioms could be multiplied in each of these languages and for all Bantu languages. When a people is able to think in terms of metaphor, as the above instances shew, it is easy to understand what a fruitful basis they have for the development of the rich aphoristic lore, which is one of the priceless possessions of the Bantu.

III. THE ORIGIN OF INDIVIDUAL APHORISMS

The principle of aphoristic formation must have been established at a very remote period. How the earliest aphorisms were formed, and by whom, it is idle to conjecture. Similar formations are known in every language and country of the world. What we can consider, however, is that, once the principle was established and in vogue in a language, in more relatively recent times individual aphorisms had definite points of origin. First of all it is noticeable that a number of important aphorisms are common to a large number of Bantu languages. Take for instance the Tswana: *Tšhoene ga ipone mariba*, The monkey doesn't see its own hollow eyes; in (ki)Mbundu: *Hima katarie kumukila ue*, The monkey does not notice his tail; in Swahili: *Nyani haoni kundule, huliona la mwenzawe*, The monkey does not see his own hinder parts, he sees his neighbour's; in Nyanja: *Anyani woka amasekana (nkolo zao)*, Baboons laugh at one another ('s buttocks); in Mukuni: *Wasokwe wala-liseka makoto*, and in Lamba: *Wakolwe walasekana mapato*, Monkeys laugh at one another's overhanging brows. This similarity of thought and of form can only be due to one of two things: either the Bantu possessed this aphorism before the dispersal of the various tribes, or else a remarkable diffusion has taken place across the whole Bantu area. The former is the more

likely. The fact that this, and many another, aphorism of the Bantu carries the same sentiment as the European "The pot calls the kettle black", does not indicate a common origin between the two culture areas. We must conclude that there were distinct geneses. The expressions are entirely distinct one from the other: the sentiments are parallel, as is only to be expected at times, for both result from human mental processes. Such examples may be multiplied. We will notice only one more here. The Tswana: *E bōnoa ke motšoga pele, motšoga morago ga e bone* (The early riser alone gets it, not the late riser) is exemplified in its true Bantu setting in the Lamba: *Ūcelela imfumu eulya utwamacelesi* (He who goes early to greet the chief is the one who eats the early morning gift of food). The English equivalent is, of course, "The early bird catches the worm".

A study of Lamba aphorisms⁸, however, shews a close connection between a number of them and certain Lamba folk tales. The question arises: did the aphorism originate in the tale? was it merely used in the tale? or, was the tale woven round an already existing aphorism? Here is an example: *Uli cimbōlo ulitinamine ifupa*, You are a hyena, you chose the bone, i.e. you don't know how to select good value. The story goes that Mr Lion caught an animal and sent his child to call Mr Hyena to the feast. When he came, Mr Lion said; "Take a leg of the buffalo and eat it". But Mr Hyena, when he saw the huge skull (from which the meat had already been cleaned), sprang up, snatched it and rushed off. So everyone laughed at him and said: "It is Hyena himself, he chose the bone!"—The hyena's partiality for bones has been observed.

The hunger-time saying, *Kamulilya, kwa-Wacawala walukulilya* (You eat yourself, at Chawala's village people are eating themselves), is credited with originating in a strange little story. In a time of extreme hunger a man, in search of food, reached Chawala's village and found that they had been fortunate enough to kill an animal. They gave him some meat. This he

⁸ cf. C. M. Doke, *Lamba Folk-lore*, Section II, "Aphorisms".

secreted, tied round his waist, and went home. When he reached his home he sat down by the fire and exclaimed: "This year, we orphans, how shall we pull through?" After a while he took out his knife and sliced at his waist. Screaming, he took out a slice of meat and put it on the fire. One of his starving children said: "Father, give me a little meat". He replied: "Eat yourselves, ye devils, at Chawala's village people are eating themselves!" And the younger took a knife, and cut at his waist. And with a scream he died.

Among the Swahili many of the aphorisms⁹ are connected with well-known songs or poems. Of the aphorism, *Ni lipi liso ndu uye, na muamuwakwe?* (What affair is there that has not its brother and its brother-in-law?), Taylor says that the meaning is illustrated by the song in which it occurs:

*Lipi liso nduye, Na muamuwakwe?
Hebu langaliye, Simi langu pweke.
Nipa nlalie, Cha mkalambaki!*

"What is there but has its brother and its brother-in-law?

Just look! It is not my (case) only.

Give it me to sleep upon, (A bed) of ebony!"

That is, if you treat a guest hospitably, your turn will come too.

Muyaka, the great Swahili epigrammatist, is credited with being the originator, in his lovely poems, of many a Swahili aphorism. One instance must suffice: *Mkimbia ole wamngoja mbele* (He that runs from his fate, it waits for him on ahead), is found in Muyaka's poem:

*Aliyekimbia ole — mwendo wa myaka sitini:
Akenda umngojele — ukele mitilizini
Ukamba Ndoo tukale, — mwandani wangu,
mwandani!
Akiuza Nnani! — ukamba Simi weleo?*

"He that fled his fate — a journey of sixty years,

While he was going it waited him — seated by the gutter side (i.e. outside his house):

And it said, Come let us eat, — my dear friend!

And when he asked it, Who is it? — it said, Am I not thy fate?"

Doubtless research on other Bantu languages will give light upon the origin of individual aphorisms there too.

IV. THE FORM AND TECHNIQUE OF BANTU APHORISMS

A glance at the literary form of aphorisms in any language makes it abundantly clear that they are different from ordinary prose utterances. This difference is not entirely due to the pithiness of the sayings but also to a tendency towards the rhythmic, a tendency which at times borders on the poetical¹⁰. The archaic language in which many are couched also helps to shroud the aphorisms in a mystic, symbolic setting. These general statements are certainly applicable to Bantu aphorisms, in which are observable definite trends of literary form, which are well worth studying in any individual language. It is impossible, at this stage, to lay down rules of aphoristic formation for Bantu as a whole—we can observe certain patterns in one and another of the languages only—but we can state that Bantu aphorisms are always trite and concise; in them no words are wasted and all propositions are stated as shortly and succinctly as possible, or opposed one to the other in sharp and abrupt contrasts, in which the usual grammatical forms often seem to be curtailed or completely altered.

Some of these tendencies may be seen by scrutinising a single Zulu aphorism: *Ikhaθ'eyi-khaθayo; ikhoth'eyikhothayo* (It kicks what kicks it; it licks what licks it), a proverb signifying "tit for tat" or "one good turn deserves another". The first thing to notice about this aphorism is that while it has subject reference in the concord *i-*, the expression of the subject itself is dispensed with. The ordinary prose equivalent would read: *Inkomo ikhaθa eyikhaθayo; kodwa (or futhi) ikhotha eyikhothayo*; i.e. "The beast (cow or ox) kicks the one who kicks it; but (or also) it licks the one

⁹ Cf. W. E. Taylor, *African Aphorisms*, and W. Hichens, *Diwani ya Muyaka bin Haji Al-Ghassaniy*.

¹⁰ G. Herzog in his *Jabo Proverbs from Liberia*, p. 8, claims to find in them the germs of metre.

who licks it". In the aphoristic form the subject would never be expressed substantivally, concord reference only being used. This makes the wider application of the aphorism to people or general behaviour so much the easier. The next thing noticeable in the aphorism is the balance and contrast of the two propositions. Each section is rhythmic in itself, and the second perfectly balances the first in number of syllables and position of main and secondary stresses. Then the alliteration with the verbs *khaḡa* and *khotha* adds to the easy retention of the saying in people's minds—a feature happily brought out in the translation, by "kick" and "lick". Lastly the elisions of the final *-a* of each verb, an invariable feature of Zulu aphorisms carried out wherever possible, secures the utmost brevity.

There are very many such structural tendencies observable in Bantu aphorisms. Here we can only deal with a few of the outstanding ones.

(a) *Examples of concord reference only:*

Lamba: *Fili uku tuya*; They (*ifyeḡo*, affairs) are where we go; i.e. It depends on what happens. *Ilukutuloka lelo, na Wamunsisamba ḡalukusamba*; What (*imfula*, rain) is going to rain on us to-day, even Mr Doesn't-wash is going to wash; i.e. A tremendous storm is brewing. *Lyātinta-ko*; It (*isyamo*, misfortune) has tugged; i.e. Misfortune has befallen me.

Zulu: *Liḡunḡwa liseva*; It (*i(li)ḡumba*, clay) is worked while still fresh; i.e. Make hay while the sun shines. *Lixhoshwa kanye lesaḡe*; It (*i(li)so*, eye) is hurt once and fears; i.e. Once bitten, twice shy. *Zidla uju kwazo*; They (*izinyosi*, bees) eat their own honey; i.e. Make your bed and lie on it.

Swahili: *Likitoka lote*; When it (*jua*, sun) comes out, bask in it; i.e. Make hay while the sun shines. *Ivushayo ni mbovu*; What (*pondo*, punting-pole) ferries one across is rotten; i.e. Don't criticise what helps you. *Yakunya haina wingu*; It (*mvua*, rain) pours (and) has no cloud; i.e. The gifts of fortune are unexpected.

(b) *Simple Propositions:*

I. POSITIVE

From Lamba: *Akanonene kalōca*; The fat piece (of meat, *akanani*) burns; i.e. Serve you right for trying to take the best bit. *Nāpōsa mumēnda*; I have thrown (it) in the water; i.e. I have made a bad bargain. *Imfwiti silaḡonana*; Witches see one another; i.e. Evil-doers help each other. *Akānice kalalowō-mukulu*; A child bewitches an adult; i.e. Little pitchers have long ears.

From Swahili: *Mla-mbuzi kulipa ng'ombe*; The goat-eater pays a cow; i.e. Sow the wind and reap the whirlwind. *Mlinzi husuka teo*; The bird-tender weaves slings; i.e. I am bidding my time. *Mtembezi hula maguu yakwe*; The gadder-about eats his feet. Here we see the regular use of the Swahili axiomatic positive tense in *hu-*.

From Ganda: *Muka mubumbi alira mu lugyo*; The potter's wife eats from a potsherd; i.e. The cobbler's wife goes the worst shod. *Obwato bufa magoba*; The canoe perishes at the landing-stage; i.e. There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip.

II. NEGATIVE

From Lamba: *Akamimbya takapya*; The swallow doesn't get burnt (however near the grass-burning flames it flies to catch insects); i.e. An old fox doesn't get caught. *Kamunḡkomene taḡona-mulandu*; The one who wounds doesn't carry the blame; i.e. It is the one who instigates the deed who is culpable. In this we see the construction of the axiomatic negative with elision of initial vowel of *umulandu*. Lamba employs a large number of negative axioms with the Class 2 concord, commencing in *taḡa-* e.g. *Taḡafingḡa-muḡyo, amafingḡe alabwela*; One doesn't curse one's mate, curses come back. *Taḡafisama namḡānice, alaleḡesya*; One doesn't hide with a child, he brings trouble; i.e. he may cough or speak and so

reveal the hiding place; Don't depend on incompetent help. *Tawākānina kutali*; One does not refuse afar off; i.e. before you know what you are refusing. *Tawālawila kuwantu*; One doesn't tell it to people; i.e. Keep it secret.

The same principle of elision of initial vowel in negative axioms (or sweeping negatives) is observable in Zulu aphorisms, e.g. *Akanasifuḁa*; He has no chest; i.e. He cannot keep a secret. *Akulahlwambeleko ngakufelwa* (for *imbeleko* and *ngokufelwa*); The child's carrying-skin is not thrown away when he dies; i.e. There is hope that another child may be born. This elision is even extended to the first syllable of copulatives in negative axiomatic aphorisms: e.g. *Ayihlatshwa-mvusi* (for *yimvusi*); It (*inyamazane*, buck) is not stabbed (only) by the one who roused it; i.e. Others have a finger in the pie too. More of this Zulu negative construction will be observed presently.

From Swahili: *Msema-kweli hakosi*; Truth-teller makes no mistake; i.e. Honesty is the best policy. *Haurambwa mkono mtupu*; An empty hand is not licked; in which, remarks Taylor, "the old form of the negative in *-a* attests to the antiquity of the proverb". *Haongezwi muongezi*; The amuser is not amused; i.e. needs not to be amused.

(c) Rhythmic Simple Propositions Balanced:

Of frequent occurrence are well-balanced simple propositions in which rhythm and stress correspondencies are a feature. Notice this one from Lamba: *Mujanda yācitāla, ubwālwa ūulasasa* [syllables 3.4, 3.4]; In the house of wrangling, beer becomes bitter. Though this is a simple proposition there is a noticeable pause between the two balanced sections. The real balance in these Bantu aphorisms, however, is that of rhythm, with the germ of metre, and there is not always exact syllabic balance as in *Mwāna-pawo tawīfya-*

masya; The home-person does not spoil the dances. Here the lack of an initial syllable before *mwana* is passed over, it would have been short and light had it been there. Here are some other Lamba balances: *Ukulaŵila niwe kubwene* [5,2.3]; 'Tis you the talk has seen; i.e. Don't monopolise the conversation. *Kōnse nikumyūnga* [2,2-2]; Every way is into thorn; i.e. On the horns of a dilemma. *Musyalila-numa tawūla-kapumba* [6,3-3]; Dawdler-behind does not lack a lump on his back; i.e. He who lags may get caught by a wild beast.

Swahili has numerous examples of rhythmic balance: *Ndaa yaleo nishiba yakesho* [3.3,3.3.]; The hunger of to-day is the repletion of to-morrow. *Juzi najana sikama yaleo* [2.3, 3.3]; Yesterday's and the day-before's are not like to-day's; i.e. There is no time like the present. *Kanwa jumbe lamaneno* [2.2,2-2]; The mouth is the magistrate of words. *Konzi yamaji haifumbatiki* [2.3,3-3]; A handful of water is not to be grasped; i.e. a shifty person. Rhythm in reverse is also found: *Jawabu nawakatiwe, nawakatiwe sizani* [3.5,5.3]; A matter and its time, and time is no chance accident. *Shiba yauji yajua mpozi* [2.3,3.2]; The satiety of the pap knows the blower; i.e. When one has had enough porridge one doesn't blow to cool it. The play on words here is very noticeable, also in reverse, —*uji* (pap) and *jua* (know).

Ganda rhythmic balances: *Ekija omanyi kinyaga bitono* [3.3,3.3]; What comes when you know of it robs you of little; i.e. Fore-warned is fore-armed. *Nakabito teyesigwa* [4,4]; Fine appearance is not to be trusted. *Ntumwa tefira gyebagituma* [2.3,2-3]; A herald doesn't die in the place whither they sent him; i.e. he is sacred from injury. *Muka-mubumbi alira mulugyo* [2-3,3.3]; The potter's wife eats from a potsherd. Here, as in the Lamba above, the initial shortage is not noticed in the rhythm, the initial of the second section acting as a linking.

In Tsonga,* while the rhythm is fully evident, it differs generally in type from the foregoing. First we notice several with initial shortage as in: *Homu yanthiva ayinavurena* [2.3,3-3]; The ox which hunches its back is not dangerous; i.e. Its bark is worse than its bite. *Nkele wambila awuyi kusuhi* [2.3,3.3]; Rock-rabbit's hole does not go near; i.e. Words are not sufficient to settle the case. Then there are aphorisms with the second part augmented: *Vushaka byanhwari byihlangana shifuvuni* [3.3,4.4]; Kinship of partridges is found in the chest; i.e. Two clever people quickly understand one another. *Tinkunzi timbiri ati thamhi thanga rimwe* [3.3,4.4]; Two bulls cannot live in the same kraal. Similarly others have the first part augmented, e.g. *Anguluve yifambile nimenyo yayone* [4.4,3.3]; The pig has gone with its teeth; i.e. We cannot afford to wait.

The above examples are sufficient to reveal that, while hundreds of aphorisms shew no such balanced rhythm, there is a definite tendency towards it in many cases in any Bantu language. The technicalities of this rhythm, differing as they do from language to language, cannot be gone into here.

(d) *Double propositions, Second portion Explanatory:*

Large numbers of aphorisms are set in the form of double propositions, of which the second part is explanatory—still, however, cryptic in style. One finds such in the Ganda: *Okwerinda sibuti, Wansanafu aita agalude*; Being on one's guard is not cowardice, (even) Mr Biting-ant marches with spear poised;—and he cannot be accused of cowardice! Extremely common are these propositions in Lamba, as the following will shew: *Insiku nimfwiti, silalowana*; Days are witches, they bewitch one another; i.e. they are fickle. *Kabwa-lälö'yu, tapêla*; A sleeping dog this he doesn't give; i.e. He is a miser. *Mukulu*

mupundu, ulêkatila mwilutôa; An elder is a Pundu tree, he bears fruit in the flower; i.e. He has the goods though he does not reveal them. *Ndi nda, ndalutôla mu-mêno*; I am a louse, I get lost in the teeth; i.e. I am elusive. *Umwôlalume niyongoli, tatandwa limo*; A male is a millipede, he is not driven away with one driving (only); A man does not take a single refusal from a girl.

These explanatory propositions are, at times, expanded by additional explanation when that is felt to be effective. Note the following: *Ninecikwiôu, ndikalile uôune bwêlonga, aôakasi wene wâli natô*; I am a water-lily, I remain because of the sweetness of the river, the real wife he (my husband) has; said by the non-favoured wife of a polygamist. Lamba is rich in self-adulatory or self-depreciatory aphorisms, commencing in *Nine*-, e.g. *Ninepulukwe musekwa-natûni*; I am the owl laughed at by the little birds. Similarly aphorisms aimed at another person commonly commence in *Niwe*-, "Thou art" or *Nimwe*-, "You are".

Lamba is, further, very rich in balanced double statements, the second of which is in copulative construction: *Akafumine mwôwêne, wuta kakulile*; The little thing that left the village, 'tis its bow it dragged; i.e. with its tail between its legs. The ordinary prosaic statement would be: *Akafumine mwôwêne kalikulile uôuta*. The following might be noted: *Akalilile nyina, nimwisana kafumine*; The little thing that mourned for its mother, 'tis from an egg it came; i.e. If you killed the parents, kill the child as well. *Imfumu ukwênda ne-wantu, cifuto kekwele*; The chief is travelling with people, 'tis good conversation he has; i.e. It pays to be kind. *Muli "tutwone" emwâilile insofu yâwêne*; In "let's see", 'tis in that that the elephant tusk was lost to its owner; Don't hand a valuable article to a crowd to see, or you'll lose it. *Musekela-nama emulya-cifupa*; He

*We regret that inadequacy of type accounts for the omission of certain diacritics in the Tsonga examples [Ed.]

who greets the animal is the bone-eater; i.e. Ready help (at a hunt) is rewarded. Sometimes the important part is placed first: *Mwivumba lyavantu avwenji, vhalalipa makosa*; It is in a crowd of many people that one assumes strength.

(e) *Negative Axioms* :

Xhosa has a large number of these commencing in the stock phrase *akukho* (there is not) and followed by a shortened type of relative construction in which the participial instead of the relative concord is employed: *Akukho-ndlovu isindwa ngumboko wayo*; There is no elephant burdened with its own trunk; i.e. A mother doesn't feel the weight of the babe she carries. *Akukho-nkwali iphandela enye*; There is no partridge (that) scratches for another; i.e. Everyone for himself. In Zulu this construction is usually further shortened by the omission of *-kho*, e.g. *Akunkwali iphandel' enye*. And these: *Akusiβonda siguga namaxolo aso*; There is no stake (that) grows old with the bark on; i.e. Years tell on everyone. *Akulanga lishona lingenandaba zalo*; There is no sun (which) sets without its affairs; i.e. Every day has its own troubles. The prosaic statement corresponding to this would be: *Akukho ilanga elishona* . . .

In Lamba a common type of negative axiom has commonly a qualificative with the first portion, e.g. *Akabwa akalya kumukupo takalubwa*; The little dog that has eaten at the skin is not forgotten; i.e. It will be caught when repeating the act. *Akana kansoka takalala munsila*; A young snake never lies in the path; i.e. He has "road-sense". *Imipini ivili taipaya-mbwa*; Two axe-handles don't kill a dog; i.e. Two lumps of porridge are insufficient for a meal.

Similar special constructions of negative axioms may be observed in other Bantu languages.

(f) *Contrast Propositions*:

There are two types of these, in the first of which a positive and a negative statement (or sometimes two like statements) are set out in parallel order, while in the second there is an inversion of the order of words between the two statements. This second type is called *chiasmus* or *cross-parallelism* (a good example of which is in the quotation: "I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed"), but it is of far less frequency than the *direct parallelism* of contrast aphorisms in Bantu.

I. DIRECT PARALLEL

Tonga (of middle Zambesi): *Siatudye mwangangu, uyodya kumubotu wakwe*; He who eats with my child, he will eat where it is good for him. *Kuba nkucela, kubeja nkuubiya mutwe*; To steal is to gather, to lie is to lighten the head.

Swahili: *Kilimia kikizama kwa jua, huzuka kwa mvua*; *kikizama kwa mvua, huzuka kwa jua*; If the Pleiades rise in sun, they set in rain; if they rise in rain, they set in sun.

Lamba: *Insiku sinji, amasako anama ace*; Days are many, the hairs of an animal few. *Ndasye waonda, vanyina-fyala waine senge*; Ndashye is thin, his mother-in-law is shining fat; in praise of the male lion on account of his thin waist. *Umuwili waya, umutima tawile*; The body went, the heart did not go.

Lala: *Umwiko tavēpusya pakuya, umwiko vēpusya pakubwela*; The omen one does not enquire on going, the omen one enquires on return; i.e. Ignorance is bliss.

II. CROSS PARALLEL

Tonga (of Middle Zambesi): *Siakule kulabolwa; kutabolwi nkukufwa*¹¹; The greatest traveller will return: he not returning 'tis to die.

¹¹ This is the only instance among the 65 aphorisms given by Fell in his *Ingano zya Batonga*. p. 310.

Tsonga : *Nkhongeli angadlawi, kudlawwa mbhala-burena*; He who prays for mercy is not killed, there is killed the fierce fighter.

Lamba : *Umutima toŵika, iciŵika menso*; The heart doesn't put away safely, what puts away is the eyes. *Akalyo kamo takatoŵa-citenje, icitoŵe'citenje kanwa*; One morsel of food doesn't break a company, what breaks a company is the mouth. *Insiku sinji, icili umo mweo*; Days are many, what is one is life.

Zulu : *Inala ayihambi, kuhamb' indlala*; Prosperity does not travel, there travels famine. [Note the play on words : *inala* and *indlala*.]

(g) Reduplication:

A very common construction of aphorisms, found in all Bantu languages, is that containing reduplicated or repeated words. These reduplications, which strikingly arrest the attention are commonly at the commencement of the proposition, but not invariably so.

In Bondei, for instance, out of 85 aphorisms given by Woodward¹², three are of this type : *Gogola gogola, imulike hondo kabananga mwana. Fuko fuko, nkaigana na langa. Sosa sosa, ilawila kwe gego.*

Tonga (mid-Zambesi) has a number, e.g. *Ndenda ndenda, musinzo ule echito*; I travel, I travel, the long journey is at the ferry. *Manyika manyika, ijulu ndimwi*; Countries, countries, heaven is one. *Ngunu ngunu, ngwababili*; Chatter, chatter, there are two.

In Swahili : *Abadi, abadi, ukambaa watinda jiwe*; Continually, continually, the cord cuts the stone. *Haba nahaba kujaza kibaba*; A few and a few fill up the measure. *Haraka, haraka, haina baraka*; Hurry, hurry, has no blessing. Note the rhythm, alliteration and rhyme of these last two in Swahili.

In Lamba : *Muli tunini tunini emo fikumanina*; In little by little the measure is filled.

Stories in the Bondei Language, pp. 57-9.

Namailo namailo fyōpelē'fyo wekabwa kānji; Tomorrow and tomorrow, just the same, my little dog; i.e. Well done, keep it up. *ŋkaya! ŋkaya! alepaisya*; I'll go! I'll go! causes death. *Ōca-ko! ōca-ko! cōŵe*; Roast it! roast it! 'tis your own.

Ganda has : *Bugu-bugu simuliro*; Splutter, splutter isn't fire. *Kāmu kamu gwemu-ganda*; One by one make up the bundle. In Tsonga note : *Kuŵongo kuŵongo kuyiwa kule*; Little by little one goes far. And in Southern Sotho : *Lehale-hale lea ja*; Continued effort achieves.

(h) Use of Quoted Words:

As with aphorisms everywhere, one occasionally finds in Bantu quoted words used to drive home the point. Some examples from Ganda will be sufficient to illustrate this. "*Omwenge si mere*" *ayogeza ekiruwi*; "Beer isn't food" are the words of fierce anger. "*Bigweredawo*" *ngowuwo yameze*; "That'll do" (is what you say) when it's your man who has thrown (his opponent). "*Nafira ku kinene*", *ensanafu ku gere saja*; "I'll die for a big thing", says the biting ant on the big toe. "*Bya kuno*" *tasenguka, agoba abaja*; (He who always says) "The state of things here" doesn't leave (his master), yet he drives away those who are coming.

(j) Miscellaneous Patterns:

There are many more patterns observable in each Bantu language. There are those aphorisms with the pattern "If—, then—", as in (u)Mbundu : *Iso lisumbe osoke, osoke oco yisumbe iso*; Let the eye respect the grass-seed, then the grass-seed will respect the eye. Or in Tsonga : *Loko ungaloyi, nkondo wanoyi wakulanda*; If you do not bewitch, the foot of the witch follows you.

The pattern "It is better . . ." is also found, as in Tsonga : *Kuŵutuma kutlula hikufamba khwatsi*; It is better to go slowly than to run.

Many Lamba aphorisms commence with the forms: "As for thee—", "As for you —": *Nawe kwēnu ninsumbi silemene-ko*; As for thee, in thy village it is the fowls that are respected. *Namwe lombā cice, cāmulela-nguni*; As for you, (your friendship) is brief, it is as the fluttering of the honey-guide. Aphorisms of this type usually embody bitter sarcasm.

* * *

As is to be observed in aphorisms everywhere, so in Bantu is to be found a wealth of metaphor, simile, hyperbole and irony, a vivid reflexion of human emotion and observation common to humanity the world over.

It is only to be expected that an understanding and appreciation of the application of many an aphorism depend upon an understanding of the people. Often detailed knowledge of local conditions and customs is necessary. Hambly¹³ refers to one such, when he writes: "The aphorism, 'That which destroyed the buck came from its own head', may appear meaningless until we recall the custom of blowing a horn to attract the attention of antelope". Difficulty for the uninitiated is only increased by a common practice of quoting only the first word or two of the aphorism, these being sufficiently suggestive of the whole. Just as in English it is sufficient to say: "There's many a slip", so for instance in Lamba it suffices to say: *Ifilawila 'wākasi* (What the wife says) for *Ifilawila 'wākasi amatako alawemba*; What the wife says, (and) the buttocks quiver; i.e. He is a hen-pecked husband; or *Fukwe alano-nena* (Tortoise is fat for) for *Fukwe alano-nena awānonena*; Tortoise is fat for those for whom he is fat; i.e. It is a matter of pure luck.

V. THE CONTENT AND TEACHING

OF BANTU APHORISMS

In addition to the philological and literary interest of aphorisms, they also have a sociological and psychological value. Though this latter aspect of the aphorism is not so important for our study as is that of its literary form, some reference must be made to it. Bound up with it is naturally the classification of aphorisms¹⁴, and this is by no means an easy subject upon which to decide. There are several ways of approaching this. Firstly, the classification may be strictly alphabetical. Certain proverbs lend themselves to such an arrangement, which is handy for reference, for instance in Lamba, *Kolwe pamulamali nemukosi* (With the brother-in-law, the monkey has a neck) is always used in exactly those words, and would come under 'k', or: *Fili uku tuya* (They are where we go) would always commence in 'f'. But with a great number of aphorisms, the forms may be greatly varied; they may be singular or plural, or first, second or third person in reference, and are liable to vary in their commencing letter. Take as an instance: *Napōsa mumēnda* (I have thrown it into the water, i.e. I have made a bad bargain), might be heard as *Wapōsa mumēnda* or *Wapōsa mumēnda* or *Twapōsa mumēnda* or *Mwapōsa mumēnda* (Thou has thrown—, They have thrown—, We have thrown—); or it may be used in other tenses: *Ndukupōsa mumēnda* or *Nakupōsa mumēnda* or *Nsipōsele mumēnda* (I am throwing—, I shall throw—, I have not thrown—). All of these are legitimate uses of one proverbial basis *pōsa mumēnda*—, "throw into water". A strictly alphabetical classification, then, does not work out.¹⁵ One might, then, suggest a classification based on the root of the first word. This however could only apply to verb roots—nouns going down under initial letters.

Most aphorisms contain one leading word and

¹⁴ cf. E. Westermarck, *Wit and Wisdom in Morocco*, pp. 42 et seq.

¹⁵ An examination of the lists in *Lamba Folk-lore* (by C. M. Doke) will illustrate this. Nevertheless in Swahili, where there are no initial vowels to the nouns, Taylor was fairly successful with this method.

¹³ in his *Source Book for African Anthropology*, Part I, p. 30.

some collectors have arranged them under such words. In such a classification, *Napōsa mumēnda* would go under the heading *amēnda* (water); *Kolwe paŵenji tatwa-ŵuŵale* (A monkey among a crowd does not pound the *ŵuŵale* fruit) might go under *kolwe* (monkey) or *uŵuŵale*; *Tawākāmīna kutali* (One doesn't refuse afar off), under *kāna*, refuse; *Kuno eko ulasile?* (Is it here you have wounded? i.e. is this your motive?) under *lasa*, wound. But, here again, there are some aphorisms in which no leading word occurs, e.g. *Fili uku muli* (They are where you are, i.e. Evil be to him who evil thinks).

Yet another method of classification is according to subject or situation dealt with. H. P. Junod, for instance, divides his Tsonga proverbs into (i) Those connected with Animal folklore, and (ii) The Ways and Habits of the People. The first is sub-divided under the names of all the various animals; the second has a suggestive classification into (1) Government, chiefs, servants; (2) War, quarrels, courage, cowardice; (3) Journeys and hospitality; (4) Court cases; (5) Family and village life, dealing with parents, children, married life, women, family relationships; (6) Food, utensils, eating; (7) Work; (8) Mouth and tongue; (9) Wisdom and boasting; (10) Mental reflexions. The classification in this book could be improved upon, and with a very careful sub-division, a valuable cross-section of the mental attitude of the people could be revealed through their aphorisms. In all probability a combination of this method with that of treating the leading word will prove to be the best for Bantu aphorisms.

* * *

Naturally aphorisms reflect the life and thought of the people using them, but their employment is so universal, and one people so readily, so enthusiastically, absorbs the aphorisms of another—as evidence the universal translation of the Hebrew *Book of Proverbs*—that they can be considered in the light of a reflection of human thought, as well as of racial or national thought. It is certain that religious belief is reflected in proverbial lore. That the teachings of Islam

permeate Moroccan proverbs is well shown by Westermarck in his collection; so are the teachings of Jehovah reflected in the proverbs of Solomon; but we find very little of the animistic beliefs of the Bantu reflected in their aphorisms. Possibly this is due to the lack of codification of their religious beliefs. Nevertheless there is much that is distinctive of their customs and outlook, as these from Tsonga exemplify: *Ta mikosi ta rilana* (The cattle of the mourner bellow to each other); *Mhamba a va phahleli* (One cannot offer a sacrifice to the dead for other people); *Ritlama ambala ni vutomi* (Put on the copper necklace when you are of age); *Ndyelo wa šikwembu ndyelo wunwe* (The plate of the ancestral spirit is one for all). One could multiply such in all Bantu languages. In Swahili, as is only to be expected, there is in the aphorisms a strong infiltration of religious ideas from Islam, *Mngu*, God, being frequently mentioned, as for instance in *Mngu haati pindize* (God never fails his appointed times). God, too, is mentioned occasionally in Lamba, e.g. *Apananyina Lesa tapafuka-ŋkumbi* (Where God prepares food, there does not rise a cloud of smoke).

One cannot dogmatise regarding the moral tone of Bantu aphorisms. There are some which reveal high ideals, as in the Lamba, *Kamwendo' mutimo'mo, imitima iwili tēyo* (Walk with a single heart, not with two hearts); *Wemwāna wānji kotinā'kasompe* (My child, fear the long grass; i.e. avoid immoral women); or in the Tsonga, *Ku nyika nku hayeka, ku ŋona n'ku tkukumeta* (To give is to save, to be mean is to throw away.) But one cannot avoid feeling that the origin of such has been in the hard school of expediency rather than in that of lofty morals. Rather are they clear reflexions of life's experience, in which are mirrored the results of honesty and duplicity, of bravery and cowardice, of cunning and stupidity, of anger and forbearance. As is the case with aphorisms everywhere, opposite interpretations exist side by side. We all know the opposite in English *Many hands make light work* and *Too many cooks spoil the broth*. So we have in Lamba, *Kamwenda, mwipula'kalulu* (Hurry, don't let the little hare get in!) and *Wimanama, uŵusungga ŵucili bwinji* (Don't be in a hurry, there is still plenty

of porridge); or *Amatwi alapusa* (Ears miss the mark) and *Amatwi tekaliwa* (Ears don't need to be set in position, i.e. they'll hear when least expected). So in Tswana: *Goare go shuioa go eloe ruri* (When men die they depart for ever) and *Goa shoa motho go sale motho* (When a man dies a man remains). The fact of the matter is that such contrasts are each true when used in different contexts, in different situations.

I know of no study of Bantu aphorisms so well thought out and documented as the survey given by E. W. Smith of Ila proverbs in his monumental work, *The Ila-speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia*.¹⁶ What Smith says regarding Ila could apply, to a great extent, to any other Bantu language, and I cannot do better than quote here extensively from his work, in order to give a picture of the type of teaching and the "tone" of aphorisms in Bantu. After stating that their proverbs¹⁷ express the likes and dislikes of the people in certain directions in quite an unmistakable fashion, Smith divides them into "rules of conduct", "criticism of life" and "smart sayings". He states¹⁸:

"The first class contains maxims and precepts, truths verified in the experience of the tribe and inculcated as rules of conduct. Many of them are serious enough, but the laughter is never far away. A Mwila greatly objects to being made fun of, and his susceptibility to ridicule is a powerful instrument in the hands of those who try to improve him. He can often be laughed out of a thing when argument and even force are unavailing.

"Among the social virtues most appreciated is hospitality, and we are not surprised to find it inculcated in various proverbs. *Mwenzu talangwa ankumu, mulange mwifu* (A visitor is to be regarded not as to his face, but as to his stomach). *Shikwaze tabidi budilo bwa nswi* (A fish-eagle does not lack fish for food on a journey); he is sure to find some, and so will you; only trust people.

¹⁶ Written in collaboration with A. M. Dale. For the proverbs—Smith's own work—see Vol. II, pp. 311-24. I am deeply indebted to Dr Smith for his ready permission for me to quote this material.

¹⁷ Smith uses the term "proverb" not "aphorism".

¹⁸ The succeeding quotation is necessarily abbreviated.

"There are Pharisees even among the Ba-ila. *Kabombwe balamusana, menzhi balamwa* (They spurn the frog but drink the water). Many an Ila proverb laughs quietly at men who puff themselves up and despise others. *Kwina mwami owakadila mumpande* (There is no chief who eats out of an impande shell). The shell may show his wealth, but when it is a matter of eating the chief must do as ordinary people do—eat out of a dish. A conceited person will be reminded that *Chishilo chibe chishinka musena* (Any old pole will stop up a hole in the fence). An overbearing stranger may be told, *Muchende tafumpuka matanga obili* (A bull doesn't enjoy fame in two herds).

"A know-all will have quoted to him the Ila equivalent of our saying about teaching one's grandmother: *Uwe muntu takukubudi banoko, kulakubula banji* (Oh man, don't try to teach your mother, try others). Or he will be curtly bidden, *Kula ubone twanshi* (Get grown up and then you will know the things on earth).

"Many proverbs are aimed at evil speakers. *Kamunazaka o mulozhi, shikalaka ulayaya chishi* (Build rather with a witch than with a false-tongued person, he destroys a community). *Kaluba mwambi, mwambitwa taluba* (The speaker may forget, but he who is spoken to does not forget).

"Greedy people do not come off scathless: *Mulakumune ku kudya kwalo udikwete insana* (The great-open-mouth, only in eating is his strength). The Ba-ila are far from being cowards, but they know quite well that discretion is the better part of valour. As they say: *Kabwenga moa ng'uongola* (It is the prudent hyena that lives long). A laggard will be told: *Ing'ombe insolozhi njinwa menzhi* (It is the first ox that drinks the water).

"It is very often said that Africans are deficient in gratitude; it would be truer to say that they feel thankful but do not express it in the same way as we do. *Ozona ozona* is a thanksgiving formula, or, as the Basuto say, *Ka moso le ka moso*, both meaning "To-morrow and to-morrow", i.e. give me it again and again. The proverbs show that an ingrate is spoken against. *Kunavhuna shilumamba, ushinzala udikwete ka-*

mbukwa (Better help a fighting man than a hungry person who has no gratitude).

"Squanderers come in for a share of ridicule. Thus: *Ing'ombe intaka itakanya muchila wayo* (The prodigal cow threw away her own tail). An obstinate person, who suffers through not taking advice, will have this thrown at him: *Ngulube wakafwa mu shitamba* (The pig died in the trap)—against which it was warned.

"We may pass now to a series of proverbs which contain advice for discreet conduct in various relations of life. Perhaps we may put under this heading a proverb which is the very reverse of the golden rule: *Wanchita mwenzha-kabotu, ame ndakuchita mwenzha-kabotu; wanchita mwenzha-bubi, ame ndakuchita mwenzha-bubi* (If you do me a good turn, I will do you a good turn; if you do me an evil turn, I also will do you an evil turn). Of similar effect is the other: *Nehuna olwaku muma, ame olwaku menzhi ndakuhuna* (Help me in my need on the bank, and I will help you in yours in the water).

"Advice is given to masters in dealing with their slaves. *Bana ba manga balauminwa dimwi* (Twin children are both beaten at the same time)—treat them all alike. And remember, too, *Muzhike wako ulumbwa n'aloboka* (Your slave is praised after he has run away from you). It is a wise saying that a man should be on good terms with his doctor: *Chenjezha nganga, malwazhi eza bu seka* (Annoy the doctor and sickness will come laughing). Advice is given to people to keep their friendships in constant repair: *Inzhi ikufwine nj'ikukala* (The fly that loves you is the one that sits on you)—visit your friends and so show your affection.

"They recognise that walls have ears. *Kadya maluvo oku mukoa kadikubwene* (While you are away from home visiting, your own people know all about you). *Mweemena mu mumbwe umwini mumbwe katelele* (If you weep in a deep pit, the pit even will hear you).

"Another series urges the necessity of a man looking out for himself and getting all he can. *Mudimo wa mwami tokasha kudisala injina* (The work of a chief doesn't prevent one from hunting out one's own fleas). And remember, *Muzhimo*

udiamba ng'udya nyama (The god that speaks up is the one that gets the meat).

"Others inspire men with patience and courage. *Luwkavahwa ndu lumana munda* (Much coming in and out finishes the field)—so keep at it. *Bushiku bomwi tabubozha muzovu* (One day is not sufficient to rot an elephant)—Rome was not built in a day. To a man in great distress one would say: *Ngu menzhi kumbele* (There is water ahead)—don't despair.

"We come now to the second class of proverbs, those expressing what we may venture to call the Ba-ila criticism of life. Many show a recognition somewhat cynical, of certain unpleasant facts. For example, that death wipes out our memory from the minds of all but perhaps a few. *Chabola chiya ku beni* (That which is rotten goes to its owners). The injustice of life finds many an expression. *Mukamwami uleba ubeesha bazhike bakwe* (When a chief's wife steals she puts blame upon her slaves)—a poor man is powerless against the rich and influential. Then there is the suggestion that very often things are not what they seem. *Kusambwa itomba buzhike tabumana* (You may cleanse yourself, but it is not to say you cease to be a slave). The painful fact that people cannot live long together without some quarrelling is thus expressed: *Matako aswangene tabudi mutukuta* (Buttocks rubbing together do not lack sweat). There is ample recognition of the fact that men follow the inclination of their minds, and that it is useless to try to force them into channels from which they are averse. *Kapuka takashinikizhiwa umbwina mbu katazanda* (An insect cannot be forced into a burrow which it does not like).

"It is not for another to criticise me if I choose a thing he doesn't like. *Chikonda utwele* (The old thing pleases him who married her)—whatever others may say about it. *Chibi ku bantu ukudi baina nchibotu* (What is ugly to other people is fair in the sight of its mother).

"We come to those proverbs which give expression to the fatalism so characteristic of the Ba-ila. The certainty that trouble is the fate of all men and that it is hopeless to try to avoid it: *Ulabuka bwifu* (It will arise as surely as the stomach)—

some time or other a woman will be pregnant, and trouble is just as certain. *Ushikwaze ulelala* (Even the fish-eagle has on occasion to go to bed hungry).

"The third class of Ila proverbs includes smart sayings and clever metaphors rather than maxims or precepts, though included with the others in the general term *tushimpi*. Thus a man deceived by another upon whose promises he was relying may say to him: *Wankuluzha olutalampi* (You shave me with a blunt razor). When a person is urged to do something he is determined not to do, he may close the argument by ejaculating: *Mani nkwohunika o lukwi!* (Until I cover you up with a winnowing basket!)—an impossible feat; he means, never! One of the smartest things of this sort is the saying applied to a person who is overkind, suspiciously anxious to do you a favour: *Ukwete luse kwa mulozhi* (He has the kindness of a witch)."



VI. LITERATURE OF APHORISMS

"Proverbs" have been collected and published in quite a number of Bantu languages, but it is surprising in how few of them any real, serious study has been made. It is not known how many any one Bantu language may use. Collections exceeding 2000 have been made.¹⁹ Probably the number will ultimately be found to be much more.²⁰ As far as we know there are only eight²¹ Bantu languages in which published collections exceed 500.

The earliest collection is that of W. E. Taylor in Swahili, *African Aphorisms, or, Saws from Swahili-land*, published in 1891, which contained 629 aphorisms in Swahili, 35 in Giryama, 62 in "Nyika", 1 in Taita and 2 in Ganda. Taylor's work is scholarly. In addition to the text of the aphorism is the literal English translation followed by explanatory and historical notes. At the time of his death Taylor was revising and adding

¹⁹ W. F. P. Burton reports about 3,000 in his Luba MS. collection.

²⁰ Spanish proverbs are estimated at 30,000, while Wander actually estimated the German at 145,000!

²¹ I do not know how many are contained in da Matata's *Philosophia popular* of 1891.

to his collection for a second edition. This is still incomplete but contains about 2,500 aphorisms.

The next collection in date is that published by Azariel Sekese in his *Mekhoa le Maele a Ba-Sotho* (Customs and Proverbs of the Sotho People) which appeared in 1907. In this pages 81-408 are taken up with 824 aphorisms with explanations in Southern Sotho. There is practically no attempt at a classification of these, but they constitute a valuable collection.

In 1914 the West Central African Mission of the A.B.C.F.M. published from their Mission press *A Collection of Umbundu Proverbs, Adages and Conundrums*. This contains about 520 aphorisms, but the treatment is very poor; some are translated into English, some have merely slight explanations, some have neither. The classification is alphabetical.

In 1916, however, appeared a remarkable book, *Sechuana Proverbs with Literal Translations and their European Equivalents*, by Solomon T. Plaatje, that literary enthusiast of obscure and doubtful origin²², who made such varied contributions²³ to Tswana literature. In his preface he wrote: "Much²⁴ of the oral native philosophy is too plain and therefore too frank for civilised ears. This is particularly true in regard to some of the proverbs relating to the relation between men and women. In this collection, sayings of that class are carefully omitted. This omission is not inconsistent with primitive Sechuana custom. Old people never mentioned such sayings in the presence of youth or uncircumcised adults, whom they always classed with the children.

"It is the author's belief that had these aphorisms been collected thirty years ago, this book could have been enlarged to nearly three times its size. With the spread of European speech and thought in South Africa, these primitive saws are fast being forgotten."

Plaatje observed that large numbers of the aphorisms originated on the pastures or the

²² Probably of Vaalpense Bushman parentage.

²³ In Phonetics, Proverb-lore, Shakespearean translation, lexicography, journalism and politics!

²⁴ The proportion of this is probably far less than Plaatje thought.

hunting-field, and that the wealth of Tswana vocabulary lies in the same direction. His collection consisted of 732 aphorisms, to each of which he put a literal translation and, in almost every case a European equivalent. These European equivalents are taken from English, Dutch, Danish, French, German, Italian, Latin, Portuguese, Spanish and the Scriptures. Some are far-fetched in their comparisons, but the high degree of comparison, which he has been able to achieve, argues strongly for the universal application of aphorisms. At the time of Plaatje's death he was preparing a greatly enlarged second edition of this work, but it has disappeared along with several other manuscripts of his.

P. Hecklinger was the next important contributor. In 1921 he published serially in the *Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen-Sprachen* (Vol. XI) a list of 723 Duala aphorisms—"Dualasprichwörter", with German translation and brief explanation.

C. M. Doke's *Lamba Folk-lore* was originally built up around the collection of aphorisms it contained. These were published in 1927 as Part II of the book (pp. 281-519) and numbered 1695. This number was subsequently increased by the publication of a further 272 in "Additional Lamba Aphorisms" (*Bantu Studies*, IV, 1930). This constitutes the largest collection of Bantu aphorisms (nearly 2000) yet published. In this the classification was alphabetical, each aphorism being followed by English translation and explanation. It was demonstrated that many of the aphorisms are connected with, if they did not originate in, folk-tales, 159 of which are included in the book.

In 1930 G. Kuhn contributed 702 Northern Sotho aphorisms—"Sotho-Sprichwörter"—in Volume XX of the *Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen Sprachen*. There is no classification of these, but each is translated and followed by a brief explanation in German. The collection is, however, followed by an extensive index of subjects and important references in German, prepared by E. Meyer. This is quite a useful method of treatment.

A recent important publication on this subject is *Vutlhari bya Vaṭonga, or The Wisdom of the*

Tonga-Shangaan People, a large and interesting collection of aphorisms and riddles prepared by H. P. Junod and A. A. Jaques, and published in 1936. This contains 892 aphorisms, arranged, as has already been observed, in accordance with the subject treated. A novel feature of this publication is that the Tsonga text of aphorism and explanation occupies the left-hand page, the right being taken up by the English translation of the aphorism and its explanation. The book is of value therefore to Native students, as well as the European enquirer.

From the foregoing it is seen that the Sotho group of languages is well catered for, representative collections existing in Southern Sotho, Northern Sotho and Tswana. Not so well served, however, is the Nguni Group. In Xhosa, R. Godfrey included a number of aphorisms in his "Lexicography" articles which appeared in the *Blythwood Magazine*, and in his *Bird-lore of the Eastern Cape Province*; I. Bud M'Belle gave 219 in his *Kafir Scholar's Companion*; and W. B. Rubusana had 100 in his *Zemk'inkomo Magwalandini*; but there is no systematic collection for this important language. It is the same with Zulu. *Zulu Izaga* by a "Zulu Missionary" in 1880 contained 189; J. G. Stuhardt contributed 144 to the journal *Nada*; scattered through J. Stuart's *Zulu Readers* are about 150; F. Mayr contributed 129 to the journal *Anthropos*; and larger numbers, collected in the first place by Carl Faye, are mixed up with various idioms in a section of R. Samuelson's *Zulu Dictionary*.

In Ganda, 100 aphorisms comprise Pilkington and Cook's *Engero Za Baganda* of 1901, while the next year H. W. Duta published a much bigger collection in his book of the same title. Both these publications were in Ganda vernacular only; but in 1921 F. Rowling included 101 aphorisms in Ganda and English in his *Guide to Luganda Prose Composition*.

For the important Nyanja area we are dependent upon aphorisms quoted in D. C. Scott's *Mang'anja Dictionary* and a collection of 101 made by W. P. Johnson. Collections are sadly attenuated in many languages which should be better treated.

E. S. Mucambe has produced a worthy collection of 353 in Tswa, with vernacular explanations in his little publication *A Mabingu ya Batswa ni Titekatekani*; and a little booklet of exceptional interest is Sipopa L. Kupe's *Matama e-tjikalanga anopesa*, only 19 pages containing 114 Kalanga aphorisms, compiled by the only Kalanga Native who has shewn any literary tendency.

C. Bantu Riddles

Among the Bantu the propounding of riddles constitutes a form of entertainment, an indoor game, commonly indulged in around the fire at night, particularly by the young folk of the village. The riddle describes something in obscure metaphor and calls for the exercise of intellectual skill in answering it, though, in many cases, the answers to riddles become known, and then the contest becomes one more of memory than of wits. This type of entertainment among the Bantu may be divided into three main types: the simple riddle, the problem and the song-riddle.

I. THE SIMPLE RIDDLE

These occur in great numbers in all Bantu languages. Some seem of universal application (like many aphorisms), others are of local, individual or recent manufacture, some doubtless being made up by young people of exceptionally keen intellect. Though interrogative in intent riddles are never so in form in Bantu. There is a technique for the propounding of them and rules of the game are singularly uniform throughout Bantu. In Lamba, for instance, the propounder says, *Tyo!* an exclamation which means "Guess". The other, if he is prepared to try, will then say. *Kakesa!* (Let it come!) or *Kamuleta!* (Bring it!). Thereupon the riddle will be stated and answered if possible. If the acceptor is able to solve the riddle, the first must put forth another until he baffles the second. If the second is then unable to answer, he puts forth a counter riddle, until he in turn baffles the first, when the first has to explain his obscure riddle and the second likewise. They are then quits, and start over again.

Smith says of the Ila²⁵ that the invariable formula is *Kako!* (This! i.e. Here is one for you!) and the reply, *Kakeza!* (Let it come!). Schapera describes Kgatla (Tswana) procedure as follows:²⁶ "When two children play at riddles, the one begins by interrogating the other. As long as the latter is able to answer correctly, the former has to continue setting one riddle after the other, until at last the latter is unable to give a right solution. Thereupon the former says, *A di tla marêkwe* (Let the buyers come; lit. let come those which are sold). The latter now assumes the role of questioner, and continues in the same way until his opponent is also baffled. He then says, *Mpolêllê ya go* (Tell me yours), and he is told the answer to the riddle he was unable to solve. In reply he says, *Le nna ya ka ke . . .* (And as for me, mine is . . .). Nakene²⁷ describes the game among the Tlokwa (Northern Sotho) as one of teams. Young people divide themselves into two rival groups and the same procedure is followed as between two individuals. He observes that the more often riddles are "played" the less puzzling they become. What is really wanted by a champion is not the number of riddles in store, but the number of puzzling riddles he has.

In the riddles, as in the aphorisms, are often to be found words and phrases that baffle the understanding; sometimes unusual or archaic words are employed; sometimes mystifying words, which have no meaning²⁸ and never, seemingly, had a meaning are employed. Plays on words are similarly introduced. Lindblom²⁹ observes: "Even riddles that from a native viewpoint do not require to be known by heart but can be solved by thinking out, are not always solvable by a European. And even when told the answer he is often at a complete loss to understand it. The riddle appears to him meaningless, perhaps even outright stupid, which in reality

²⁵ E. W. Smith and A. M. Dale, *The Ila-speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia*, II, p. 324.

²⁶ I. Schapera, "Kxatla Riddles and their Significance" *Bantu Studies*, Vol. VI, p. 216.

²⁷ G. Nakene, "Tlokwa Riddles" in *African Studies*, Vol. II, pp. 125-38.

²⁸ Smith, *ibid.* p. 324.

²⁹ G. Lindblom: *Kamba Riddles, Proverbs & Songs*, p. 4.

exceedingly rarely is the case. For the riddles are largely founded upon matters of actual facts, such as elements of native culture, material as well as spiritual. At the same time they often give proofs of keen powers of observation, not least in the matter of details characteristic of animals, plants or natural phenomena."

Bantu riddles are more liable to obscenity in their reference than are aphorisms. This is easily understood. They typify wit, bring a laugh, and many take the place of the lewd joke of other communities. The ancient origin of some may be exemplified by the widely-known one: "The little house without a door—the egg". In Nyanja they say: *Nda manga nyumba yanga popanda komo—Dzira!* (I built my house without any door); in Swahili: *Nyumba yangu kubwa, haina mlango—Yayi!* (My house is large, it has no door). More tritely it appears in Lamba as *Akayanda mbuluxulu—Mbe'sana; lili-po nemulyango?* (A little house compact—What of an egg, has it a doorway?). In Makua: *Wuruwuru kayano—Nyoce!* (Round with no mouth). In Tlokwa: *Nilo yaxo tloka molomo—Lekxopa!* (A house without an entrance). The Tsonga form is longer: *Ndi ngenile ndkwini ya manana, ndi kume šilo šo hava nomu—I tanda!* (I have entered my mother's hut and found a thing which had no mouth). Another riddle of wide diffusion is that which concerns the length of the Native path. In Lamba we have: *Ici tacipela—Mbe'nsila, uwaipesesye-po ninani?* (That which has no ending—What of the path, who has ever come to the end of it?). Then there is the riddle of the hair. In Giryama: *Kurima m'nda m'bomi ela ukadza vuna loya* (Cultivating a big patch, but you come to reap only a handful—It is the hair); in Swahili: *Nimepanda koonde yangu kubwa, nimevuna, haujaa mkono—Nyele* (I sowed my big field and reaped it, and my hand was not full); in Lamba: *Iciteme icakuti uŵukulu, amasaka ukucesela mumimwe—Mbomotwi, teukulu! Pakucese' misisi mumimwe, tekuleta-po icilukwa nekwisule' misisi, koku!* (A huge patch of felled trees, and the corn may be cut in the hand—What of the head, is it not big? When one cuts the hair in one's hand, one doesn't bring a basket, and

get it full of hair, no!). It is noteworthy that in Lamba the answer to the riddle is always given in the form of a question.

Riddles are of course by no means so important a literary feature as are the aphorisms. They are best classified according to the subject matter of their answers. This is what Schapera did in the case of his Kgatla collection: Natural phenomena, Vegetable world, Animal world, Crops and food, Human body, Domestic life, Utensils, White man's culture, etc.

Small collections of riddles have been made in many Bantu languages. I note here the titles of those only which give over a hundred examples. G. Tessmann gave 137 Fang riddles in his article "Rätsel der Pangwe", contributed to *Anthropos* 1915-1916. Of Lamba 144 were included by C. M. Doke in his *Lamba Folk-lore* published in 1927. J. Ittmann's article "Aus dem Rätselschatz der Kosi", in the *Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen-Sprachen* of 1930, contained 254 in the interesting Nkosi dialect of Duala. I. Schapera's article "Kxatla Riddles and their Significance" (*Bantu Studies*, Vol. VI, 1932) illustrated 129 in the Kxatla dialect of Tswana. In 1934 G. Lindblom published in the *Archives d'Etudes Orientales* "Kamba Riddles, Proverbs and Songs" in which he included 116 riddles. Junod and Jaques in 1936 published 200 Tsonga and 11 Chopi riddles in their publication on aphorisms, *The Wisdom of the Tonga-Shangaan People*. 268 Tswa riddles formed a second part to E. S. Mucambe's *A Mabinu ya Batswa ni Titekatekani*, published in 1939. L. Harries published in *African Studies* in 1942 a collection of about 250 Makua riddles; and G. Nakene some 300 Tlokwa riddles in the same journal. From these we see that no exhaustive study of any one Bantu language in regard to this subject has been made. There must be several hundreds (if not thousands) of these witty enigmas to be found in each.

The following are a few examples taken from various languages:

Ila: *Muzovu umina ch'amba mwifu—Ing'anda* (An elephant that swallows something which speaks in its stomach—a

house). *Baambana bami—Matende* (The chiefs are having a dispute—The feet). *Bachungwe bakala isamo diomwi—Matwi* (The fish-eagles that sit on one tree—The ears).

Makua: *Ikopo yowonyia umaka, nno inopia-Ipio* (A stick which is thrown at the coast reaches here—The wind).

Karwa waanlokwa nkyayakiwaka mkulu woripa—Itthalaku (I went to my friend and he gave me a black chain—Driver ants).

Tsonga: *Nkuwa lo wu tshukile—Nhwanyana ku saseka* (This fig is red—a beautiful girl). *Leŋi, nambi wa ba, nthonsi wa kone wu nga bonekiki—I mati* (The thing which you can beat without leaving a scar—Water).

Tlokwa: *Mohlanka wa lebelo—Tladi* (A fleet-footed young man—Lightning). *Ke Letwaba kxosi, ledirwa ke go lala ntlo e sa rulekwa—Leeba* (Mr. Letwaba sleeps in an unroofed house—The dove). *Lehlakana xo teka-teka le a nkxahla nka se le reme—Matswele a kxaisedi* (A tapering reed attracts me but I cannot cut it—A sister's breast).

Tonga (Zambesi): *Idambwa dila akati kamatete—Ndiso dila akati munkoye* (The pool is in the middle of the reeds—The eye in the middle of the eyelashes). *Ingombe yakesu ikumba butete—Mbwato* (Our cow rubs the reeds—A canoe).

Swahili: *Kuku wangu akazalia miibani—Nanasi* (My hen has laid among thorns—A pineapple). *Kombe ya Sultani i wazi—Kisima* (The Sultan's bowl is open—A well).

Somewhat akin are the long riddles recorded in Zulu by H. Callaway³⁰. He gives twelve of these with lengthy answers. Here is one:

"Guess ye a man who does not move; although the wind blows furiously, he just stands erect; the wind throws down trees and houses, and

much injury is done; but he is just as if the sky was perfectly calm, and does not move in the least.

"The ear. One says to them when they cannot tell: 'Whoever saw the ear of a man move, it being moved by the wind? We see trees and grass and houses move; but not the ear; the man only moves; if he is carried away by the wind, the ear is not carried away, it is he who is carried away; or if he falls, it still stands erect; or if he runs away, it still stands erect.'"

II. THE PROBLEM

These, which are much rarer than the simple riddles, were referred to by Duff Macdonald as *Conundrums in Story form*. He gave no examples however. E. W. Smith quotes three³¹ he heard among the Ila. J. H. Weeks quotes two in his *Congo Life and Folklore*.³² M. Heepe gives two in Yaunde with German translation in his *Yaunde-Texte*.³³ Probably these are much more widespread but have gone unnoticed or at least unrecorded. Here is the substance of one from the Lamba:

"A certain man lived with his wife, his mother, and his mother-in-law in a hut on one side of a river. The gardens were on the other side, and each day he ferried the women across in his little canoe which could only take one passenger at a time besides himself. After working all day in the fields they returned to the hut at nightfall in the same way. But one day, when all four were at work, a marauding band came upon them. They fled to the river. There was only time for the man to ferry across one of the women. Whom did he take?"

The solving provides much merriment. Of course *not* his mother-in-law. His wife then? No, he can get another wife! But he could not get another mother.

III. THE SONG-RIDDLE

The only case of this hitherto brought to our notice is the collection "Makua Song-Riddles

³⁰ *The Ila-speaking Peoples*, II, pp. 331-3.

³¹ pp. 43, 122.

³² No. 49 on p. 138, and No. 16 on p. 224.

³⁰ *Nursery Tales and Traditions of the Zulus*, pp. 364-74.

from the Initiation Rites" contributed to *African Studies*²⁴ by Lyndon Harries. To quote from this: "These song-riddles (*ikano*) differ in function from the ordinary Bantu spoken riddle. They are either action-songs accompanying a dance or else have a didactic purpose. The meaning of the riddle is not always explained to the children in the rites, but in the case of the didactic riddles the explanation is generally provided with much exhortation from the adults. An expert improviser leads the singing and the solution of some of the song-riddles is known only to himself. Each expert has his own stock of riddles, but a large proportion of these are well-known to other experts and differ only in grammatical forms Although many of these song-

²⁴ Vol. I, 1942, pp. 27-46.

riddles are quite harmless, others of them have double *entendre*. . . . It is tabu for an initiated person to tell these song-riddles to an uninitiated child. An initiated male person must not reveal them to a woman, nor an initiated female person to a man." Here are examples:

Ciwuyawuye cikale poromoka—Ikoŋe yorupa (Let the senses lie properly together—Sleep). Explained as follows: When a man sleeps all his senses are at rest. Everything that a man does, like looking with his eyes, breathing, listening, everything returns and becomes one in sleep, there is nothing that is done again once he sleeps.

Yawile nuhapua—Ingala (They came and drew aside—A puddle). This is one with double *entendre*; the reference here is to abstaining from sexual intercourse during menstruation.

UTYELELO LOKUMKANI NOKUMKANIKAZI
KUMZANTSI WEAfrika

THE VISIT OF THE KING AND QUEEN TO SOUTH AFRICA

A. Z. NGANI

KweyomDumba, ngomNyaka we 1947

February 1947

Bayethe! Kumkani weBritani neziThaanga,

NamaZwan' onk' aphantsi kwePhiko layo!

Mnta' kafoj' othiywe ngoyise nooyise-khulu,

Kuβ' efana nabo ngobulali nondileko;

Mlawuli wezizw' ezintlaninge nje ngeenkwenkwezi;

Yise wabant' abanga ngentlabathi yokwandle;

Kazi wox' uthini na nyak' ufaButhayo?

'Nkunz' emehl' alumezay' ayijongeki;

Inje ngechanti lasemlanjeni,

Sona silo singajongekiyo.

Siya kubulisa! Sikunik' igam' elitsha!

Sihi, Aa, Zanoxolo!

Usizisel' uxolo;

Iphekil' imfazwe, uyigqibile!

Utshaba luchithiwe, ilizwe lizolile.

Aa, Zanoxolo! Aa, Zanoxolo!

Wena Zulu-liya-xongoma,

Laxongomel' uHitler, lamhlahl' umzimba nomxhelo,

Itshoba lalal' umbethe —

Waya kwantsongwa-nyawana ngephanyazo;

Ewe wayibulal' indod' ebuso bungwanyalala.

Gora laseLondon elaziibalul' emfazweni —

Ew' edabini, kwidab' elikhulu,

Kuhlaselo lweLondon ngamaJamani;

Wawa wuka, wapheph' izigweba;

Hail to thee! Thou Monarch of Great Britain
and Dominions!

Thou King of the Colonies and Protectorates
under your Flag!

Thou Son of George named after his Father and
great grand Fathers,

For Thou resemblest them in Refinement and in
Dignity.

Thou Ruler of a myriad of Races, as many as the
Stars in the Heavens,

Father of people as numerous as the sands of the
Sea-Shore.

How, then, shall You ever be able to assemble
them?

Thou Bull with fierce eyes, nobody dares look
at You;

Thou art like a fabulous river-snake with change-
able colours;

That is a creature nobody dares look in the face.

We greet Thee! We give You a New Name!

Hail to Thee! Hail Peace-Bringer!

Thou bringest peace to us;

The war is over, Thou hast finished it;

The enemy dispersed, the World is at peace.

Hail, Peace-Bringer! Hail, Peace-Bringer!

Thou "Rattling" Thunder, you "rattled" over
Hitler,

And slicing him body and soul, he was stone cold;
He was no more, swifter than he could imagine.

Yea, Thou didst kill the man with a sullen face,
Thou Hero of London, who distinguished himself
in Battle.

Yea, in the great Battle of London —

In the great German Raid —

You stumbled and rose again, and just escaped a hit;

You made narrow escapes like a Man.

*Wasind' emacebetshwini ngokwendoda.
Mntwan' enKosi, kulo mntu kaXhosa se kusenxoweni;
Ufika se kungasekho nempunde yokulandula.
Sa'kutsho sithunuk' amanxeba, siya vukekwa;
Sicing' amadod' ayesaz' ubukhosi nombuso.
Inkosi thin' ikhethelw' amadoda;*

Ihlala kany' "ebandla", kuzimas' amagqala.

*Ungenile k'ekhay' ububel' ubunyathele;
Aph' akudhuli mntu ngendlela,
Angabuzw' aph' avela khona,*

*Nalaph' asinga khona.
Nzwan' enomkhitha, efanelwa kuhleka;
Lunyalabafa luya phindana,
Luphindana nasemfazweni nje ngomzi.
Nkosi ndin' ufikil' aph' ub' usiya khona;*

Tyaphil' ufike, ukholisil' ukuza;

*Usapho luya tshisana,
Ngumbodamo noqulukubede.
Uza usiphathel' imvula, wena ma-za-neMvula,*

*Imvul' aseKwindla, ze sivun' indyebo.
Uz' usifiye, neThamsanqa, noXolo nenKululeko;
Sahlulel' uLwazi, nobuChule kwaneMfundo.*

*Gangathan' iindlela zigangatheke,
Ahamb' uKumkani kwiindlel' eziqinileyo nezithe tse!*

*Hamba kakuhle kalok' ilizwe lelakho;
Uz' uhambe ngomzimb' okhululekileyo —
Yiba neMpilo nobutyebi beMpilo nokoNwaba.*

* * *

*Nakuwe Kumkanikazi, siya bulisa!
Siya bulisa, sithi, Aa, Nomaza!*

*Siya kubuka, kaloku wen' unguNozala,
Ozala zonk' ezi zizwe zima-bala-bala;
Thina sonke singaka nje silusapho lwakho;*

Thou Child of the Old King, You have come to us
When the Kraal of Xhosa is in ruins.
It is like a deserted village.
There is not a remnant of the Nation.
When we say so, we renew old sores;
We remember men, who, with dignity, addressed
themselves
At State occasions, for they knew the Law and
Custom.

With us, men of sound sense are selected,
To make company with a King;
He stops with them, those men of keen obser-
vation,
Thou hast come to our homes,
Thou shalt receive hospitality in abundance.
With us, no one ever passes by
Without being called in and treated like a guest,
Yea, and even like a Guest of Honour.

Most Beautiful One, Thou art handsome when
You laugh;
Thou art flexible like one used to sporting;
Thou art flexible even in war, like a reed.
It is good You have arrived; it is well You have
come;
Thy children are in a tumult and in a turmoil.
Thou bringest us rain, — Thou Rain-Bringer —
The rain of Autumn, so that we shall have a good
harvest.
Leave us with a Blessing, Peace and Freedom;
Share with us your Knowledge, Art and Education.

Pave the roads and make them hard and smooth,
So that our Monarch will tread on paths good and
straight.
Go steadily and well, for the Country is Yours;
Go with a free Heart and be of Cheer;
Be of good Health and Wealth of Health and
Happiness.

* * *

We hail Thee, even Thee, O Queen!
We greet Thee! We hail Thee, Thou Mother of
the Waves!
We look at You with keen interest,
For Thou art the Mother,
The Mother of all these Races of diverse Colours.
We are All Your Children.

Mfaz' ozala kakuhle wada wazala nezizwaba.

*Sikwamkela sikukhapha ngemididimbo yovuyo;
Sithi, hamba ngomzim' okhaphu-khaphu;
Sithi, phum' ungena, umzi ngowakho.*

Kakad' uwufanel' umz' owendele kuwo,

Nzwakazi ndin' endilekileyo nenesidima.

* * *

*Nakuni maKhosazana, nina maQobokazana;
SiBulisa kuwe, maFungwafe! nawe Thandwafe!*

*Wena maFungwaf' usicingis' uFitol' iLunga.
Xa sitshoyo maKhosazana, siya nibotisa!*

Ze nisikhumbule xa nibuyel' ekhaya;

Ewe, xa niwel' ukwandle.

Ze nikhumbul' iAfrika xa nicand' amaza.

*Ze niphuphe kamnandi xa niphupha ngayo;
Ze nibe neenkumbul' ezintle xa nicinga ngayo.*

* * *

Bathini n' abantu ngolu hambelo?

Ithini n' iAfrik' eseZantsi ngolu tyelelo?

Ithini n' iAfrika yonk' iphela?

INgonyam' enKulu neNgonyamakazi yaseBritani,

Ilucande phakath' ukwandl' olunzongo-nzongo;

Iwahlule phakath' amanzi aalo yawasakaza;

AdaBuke phakathi, agodol' angumkhenkce;

Kaloku yiBritan' elawul' amaz' olwandle.

Aqukuqel' ukubeka kwelaseNtla, kwelomKhenkce;

Asondelelan' amazwe okwexefana;

Wavaleka nomsants' owahlul' izizwe;

Zamanyan' izizwe, zaayimbumba —

Zaayimbumba yamanyama;

Zaayimbumba yamanyama.

Thou Mother who is blessed with a variety of
a Family,

Till You bore even a Black One in the Family.
We welcome You and pour showers of Blessings.
We exhort You! Go with a light Heart, this is
your Kraal.

For thou fittest well unto the Place where Thou
art married,

For Thou art teeming with Beauty and Majestic
Dignity.

* * *

We hail Ye! Even Ye, Princesses of Honour!

We greet Thee, Princess Royal, and Thou,
O Beloved One!

When we look at You, Princess Royal

You remind us of the Late Queen Victoria the
Good;

When we say these things, Ye Princesses, we
greet You!

Remember us when You return Home,

Yea, when You cross the Sea,

Remember Africa, when You cross the Waves.

Have pleasant Dreams when You dream about her,

Have pleasant Memories when You think ab-
out her.

* * *

What do the people say about this visit ?

What does South Africa say about it ?

What does Africa as a whole say ?

The Great Lion and Lioness of Britain

Have split the Deep Ocean asunder,

Its waters cleft and dispersed,

They are acleft and have changed into ice,

For they are the Monarchs of Britain,

And Britain is the Ruler of the Waves.

The water drifted to the Land of Ice and Snow.

The Continents have joined together for a time,

And the Gulf dividing the Nations has now been
bridged,

And the Nations are as one united —

Allied, in tact, and truly united,

Like a ball of beef broiled in the sun —

The Union of all the Nations!

The Union of all the Nations!

LES DANSES NKUNDU DU TERRITOIRE D'OSHWÉ AU CONGO BELGE

Mme JEAN COMHAIRE-SYLVAIN

I. Organisation générale et sortes de danses

Ce qui va suivre s'applique aux petites Batitu que nous avons vu danser à Yembe, aux femmes des villages de Loma, de Duanema et de Bayelo que nous avons vu danser à Nkao, aux hommes et aux femmes de Nkao ainsi qu'aux Batwa d'Ikembe et de Lokongo qui ont adopté les danses de leurs maîtres.

A. ORGANISATION

Pour les danses improvisées, ou *nsambo*, comme celles auxquelles il nous a été donné d'assister, il semble qu'on conserve, probablement en la simplifiant, l'organisation des grandes danses de femmes (*weti*) ou d'hommes (*nteko*) préparées plusieurs semaines, quelquefois plusieurs mois, à l'avance.

Supposons qu'il s'agisse d'une danse de femmes. Les chanteuses occupent le centre du groupe ; la première chanteuse qui dirige aussi la danse (*nkumu*) se tient tantôt à droite, tantôt à gauche ; elle se déplace fréquemment durant les danses individuelles pour exciter ses compagnes qui exécutent des mouvements sur place, ou restent immobiles en attendant leur tour de danser, si elles en ont envie. C'est à cette *nkumu* que revient l'honneur d'entonner l'air, mais son autorité, lorsqu'il s'agit du choix du morceau, n'est pas contestée, et les discussions à ce propos sont souvent interminables.

Les instrumentistes sont également au centre, généralement derrière les chanteuses ; cependant, nous avons vu le tambourineur (*bopumia ngomo*) se placer au premier plan sur le côté durant plusieurs danses des Batitu et des Batwa.

Les danseuses sont en ligne ou en arc de cercle, des deux côtés des chanteuses, face au public.

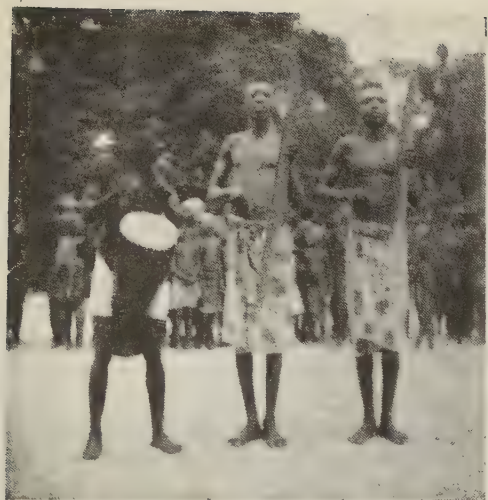
Chez les Batitu, ne sont au premier rang que les danseuses ou chanteuses-danseuses.

La disposition est la même avant le début d'une danse d'hommes.

B. SORTES DE DANSES

1. *Danses individuelles*. — Ce sont les plus communes. Prenons le cas des danses de femmes que nous avons eu l'occasion de voir plus souvent. Orchestre, chanteuses et danseuses sont disposés, comme nous l'avons dit plus haut, face à l'assistance. La première chanteuse, ou *nkumu*, entonne un air ; les autres la suivent, accompagnées des instruments qui accentuent le rythme. L'une d'entre elles se détache et se dirige en dansant vers le public (le plus souvent vers une extrémité du public). Chez les Batitu, les autres poussent alors des cris épouvantables ; la *nkumu* se déplace de droite et de gauche, face aux chanteuses, avec de grands mouvements de bras pour les exciter à élever la voix. — Dans les autres villages, seules deux ou trois vieilles poussent des cris. — Arrivée près de l'assistance, la danseuse avance vers le milieu, où sont installés d'habitude les plus grands personnages, en bougeant à peine les pieds ; elle rentre le ventre en cadence, remue le torse, élève et abaisse les bras munis de petits couteaux de parade. Au bout d'un moment, elle se retire en dansant vers l'autre côté, de façon à faire le tour de son public. La coutume veut que le public offre un cadeau à ses danseuses préférées avant qu'elles ne s'éloignent.

Les petites danseuses Batitu se suivaient souvent en file ininterrompue dans le sens opposé à celui des aiguilles d'une montre, tandis que dans les autres villages l'ordre était donné par le bon plaisir de chacune, mais la danseuse attendait généralement que sa compagne fût rentrée pour



Orchestre réduit à Bayelo : deux joueurs de *bokwasa* et un joueur de *botuturu*.



Danse *nsambo* exécutée par une femme de Duanema



Hommes de Bayelo dansant une *logenia*.



Pygmoïdes de Nkao dansant une *logenia*, le chef de la communauté dirige la danse en demeurant hors du cercle.

sortir des rangs à son tour. Quand deux danseuses sortaient en même temps d'une extrémité opposée, l'une d'elles s'effaçait précipitamment. Le cas s'est aussi présenté de danseuses sortant un peu trop tôt : leur erreur était toujours saluée des *lazzis* de la foule.

Les danses des hommes ont l'air d'être les mêmes que celles des femmes, mais ils brandissent des arcs et des flèches au lieu de couteaux.

Il a été dit plus haut que les danses individuelles habituelles étaient plutôt des danses sur place, mais ceci comporte de nombreuses exceptions. Nous avons vu, par exemple, une vieille de Loma exécuter à droite et à gauche plusieurs petits pas de côté suivis d'un pas chassé, combinaison rappelant beaucoup la conga.

2. Danses à deux. — Elles sont assez rares. Les femmes de Duanema en ont exécuté une à propos de travaux des champs, et celles de Nkao deux, avec mimique rappelant vaguement un duel ou une chasse.

3. Danses collectives. — Elles sont généralement en cercle. Le plus souvent un seul grand cercle. Les hommes de Nkao nous ont dansé quelque chose de ce genre, ainsi que les femmes des divers villages. Celles de Duanema ont aussi formé deux cercles concentriques, avec orchestre de quatre *bokwasa* (instruments de musique) au milieu ; l'ensemble était tellement parfait que le mouvement tournant s'effectuait, chaque danseuse exécutant séparément le même pas, sans que la distance changeât entre elles.

La *longenia* des hommes est aussi une espèce de danse collective à laquelle on se livre après le travail. Les hommes se réunissent et appellent les retardataires à coups de trompe, puis ils se dirigent sur un front compact, d'un pas de marche scandée, à travers le village, en brandissant leurs outils, (machettes et hoes). En avant, il y a un groupe avec des lances et l'inévitable *bokwasa* ; tous les hommes chantent à tue-tête et, devant eux, des petits garçons, munis d'arcs et de flèches, dansent en remuant le ventre et les hanches.

II. Accompagnement

A. CHANSONS

Le chant est considéré comme inséparable de la danse. Tous les airs se composent d'une ou deux phrases musicales très simples, répétées à l'infini avec de légères variantes. Les paroles se rapportent le plus souvent à des événements de la vie quotidienne. Par exemple, une jeune fille cite tous les villages Nkundu et prétend que les femmes n'y savent pas danser ; le refrain chanté par le chœur qui danse sur place, dirigé par la *nkumu*, reprend : "Elles ne savent pas danser, seules les filles de Duanema [leur village] savent danser". Ou bien une vieille raconte, en les mimant, comment elle a accompli tous ses devoirs envers son mari. Ou encore deux jeunes filles parlent de travaux des champs. Voici, à titre d'échantillon, la première phrase de quelques-unes de ces chansons (la traduction m'a été donnée par un clerc indigène) :

Y'aka ayume Isasa

Les perles viennent de Kinshasa

Ya wenge ntangondeka

Le *wenge* (grand arbre) ne me dépasse pas

Inenge asonga songa

L'*inenge* (oiseau) tend son cou

Ma opene ena-ena nsomo, bekolo, iboti mooto, beyebe, bapaka, nsina mpoketi

Maman, voici ! J'ai des tatouages et le pied fort, j'ai enfanté, je n'ai ni teigne, ni chiques, ni poux

Bolongonkele, tumanya tia !

Bolongonkele (village), ranimez le feu !

Lotika nd'iyolo yalipa ene-ena !

Yalipa, mettez-le dans le panier !

En guise de chanson, pour accompagner certaines danses, les Baritu font quelquefois entendre une espèce de bruit guttural, ou *bopelu*, rappelant un râle de bête fauve. L'effet est caractéristique

et saisissant. Elles l'exécutent en chœur, la bouche fermée. Quelques femmes des autres villages savaient comment le reproduire, mais elles ont été incapables de former un groupe suffisant pour accompagner ces danses qu'elles appellent du nom de leur accompagnement : *bopelu*.

B. INSTRUMENTS

1. *Tambours*. — L'orchestre comprenait toujours un tambour, quelquefois deux, bien que certaines danses fussent exécutées sans leur accompagnement. Il paraît qu'autrefois on se servait toujours de trois tambours, de dimensions différentes, donnant chacun un son particulier, mais que cette coutume est en train de s'en aller. Le gros tambour à son grave s'appelle *ngomo* ; le moyen, qui possède un son plus clair, *botuturu*, et le petit, également à son clair, *bonkiya*. Leur modèle n'a rien de bien original : tronc conique, avec assise légèrement évasée, hauteur 50 à 60 cm. On emploie comme matériaux un bois tendre qui peut facilement s'évider, d'ordinaire le *bopeko* ou le *bokuka*, et l'on tend, à l'extrémité supérieure, du cuir d'antilope : antilope *nkulupa*, pour obtenir le son grave du *ngomo*, antilopes *mboloko* et *mbe-ngele* pour des sons plus clairs.

Comme décoration, aucune sculpture, quelques traits obliques imitant des dessins de vannerie à la partie supérieure et une ou deux nervures en creux, en haut et en bas.

L'instrumentiste ou *bopumia ngomo* est toujours un homme. Il s'assied et frappe avec les mains le tambour qu'il tient entre les jambes.

2. *Bokwasa*. — Le *bokwasa* est l'instrument principal, il accompagne toutes les danses. Les orchestres que nous avons vus en avaient en nombre variable (un à cinq). Comme pour les tambours, il paraît qu'autrefois leur nombre était invariablement fixé à trois. Un *bokwasa* se compose d'une tige de bambou d'un mètre environ, dans laquelle on pratique une ouverture s'arrêtant à 10 ou 15 cm. des extrémités, dans le sens de la longueur. De chaque côté de cette ouverture, on pratique une ou deux entailles parallèles au bord, de façon à former deux ou quatre lamelles très fines qu'on frotte avec une baguette, le *boko-*

luwa, à la manière d'un archet. Le son obtenu rappelle celui d'une râpe ou d'une crécelle.

Les gens de Loma avaient un autre modèle de *bokwasa* dans lequel les entailles étaient remplacées par des échancrures en dents de scie.

Les joueurs de *bokwasa*, les *bokoli'okwasa*, sont des hommes ou des femmes, indifféremment.

3. *Lokombi*. — Instrument à cordes que nous avons vu à Nkao, le jour où les femmes de Bayelo sont venues danser. Joué par un homme assis, il n'a été employé qu'une fois, en même temps qu'un tambour et deux *bokwasa*, pour accompagner une danse d'hommes exécutée en cercle. Il semble bien que l'instrument ne rendait qu'un son, peut-être parce que le joueur malhabile ne pinçait qu'une corde.

Ce *lokombi* se composait : a) d'une caisse en bois de *bopeko* d'à peu près 20 x 30 cm. de section et 15 à 20 cm. de haut, fortement bombée à la partie inférieure où s'attachaient les cordes, et plus légèrement à la partie supérieure ; b) de cinq tiges recourbées, de longueurs différentes, en bois de *maka*, la plus grande ayant au moins 60 cm., toutes fixées à la partie supérieure de la caisse ; c) de cinq cordes de liane *binga*, de longueurs différentes, tendues par les tiges.

4. *Trompes*. — Nous avons entendu sonner ces instruments, en cornes d'antilopes *mbuli* et *mpenga*, en guise de prélude à une *longenia* (danse d'hommes des Nkundu) organisée après le travail par les Batwa d'Ikembe. On appelait les petites trompes *iseke*, et les moyennes *mbolialengo*.

5. *Sonnailles*. — Le costume de certaines danseuses comporte des clochettes européennes en cuivre, dites *lopambu*, et des clochettes plates indigènes en fer, dites *yengele* ; les unes et les autres sont d'ordinaire attachées ou suspendues à la taille. Les danseuses peuvent aussi porter à la cheville droite un *bokoli w'ayoko*, bracelet fait de *bayoko*, fruits séchés d'une liane offrant l'apparence de grosses noix. Quand elles se livrent à tel ou tel mouvement suivant le rythme, par exemple quand elles frappent du pied ou abaissent vivement le bras muni du couteau, les clochettes se mettent en branle, et les graines, dont sont remplis les *bayoko*, s'entrechoquent et viennent heurter les parois,

6. *Bènkènke*. — Plusieurs membres de l'orchestre de Nkao avaient en mains deux baguettes, dites *bènkènke*. Ces baguettes en bois ordinaire, de section arrondie, avaient 40 à 50 cm. de long. On les frappait l'une contre l'autre suivant le rythme.

III. Costumes

A. L'ANCIEN COSTUME DES FEMMES NKUNDU

Encore porté par les vieilles : tout le corps est enduit d'un mélange de *ngula* (poudre rouge d'origine végétale) et d'huile de palme, et repoudré de *ngula*. Le vêtement est réduit à une bandelette très étroite, le *bokoli*, en raphia également teint au *ngula*, faisant le tour du corps un peu au-dessus des hanches et retenant deux autres bandelettes (toujours en raphia rougi) : l'*insomia* passant entre les jambes et le *bonganio*, de 3 ou 4 cm. de large, serrant les fesses à peu près à mi-hauteur. Sur la bandelette des hanches se posé l'une des ceintures. La plupart de ces femmes en avaient deux ou trois ; l'une, la *bonyama*, de 2 ou 3 cm. de large, en peau d'antilope avec la fourrure à l'extérieur, les autres, dites *ekuma ya bèla*, en verroterie multicolore. Certaines en arboraient une en raphia rougi d'une vingtaine de centimètres de large. Chez les vieilles de Loma, la ceinture de peau se prolongeait derrière jusqu'aux chevilles en une espèce de queue.

Comme bijoux, ces femmes portaient : a) de deux à quatre *bekangu*, ou colliers en laiton superposés, ou bien un *bokoli w'akay*, collier de grosses perles en faïence bleu foncé, à dessins rouges et blancs, dites *bakay*, accompagné de quatre à six colliers de verroteries diverses, les *bokoli w'empumu* ; b) un nombre variable d'*ebuo*, bracelets en laiton accolés depuis le poignet jusqu'à moitié distance du coude ou jusqu'au-dessous du coude ; c) tantôt des *bontènde*, anneaux de laiton superposés de la cheville jusqu'au mollet si possible, tantôt trois ou quatre anneaux en laiton au-dessous du genou ; d) une ou deux femmes portaient aussi des *pone*, bagues en fil de laiton entourant plusieurs fois le doigt en spirale.

Plusieurs d'entre ces femmes avaient une coiffure spéciale : l'*ipemu* ; les cheveux enduits de *ngula* et d'huile de palme, de façon à en faire une pâte, avaient été séparés en une centaine de petites mèches roulées en pastilles. De loin, ces femmes avaient l'air de porter un bonnet de fourrure rouge et bouclée. Une femme de Loma avait piqué dans cette coiffure, derrière chaque oreille, une grande fleur d'un rouge plus clair, tandis que sa compagne qui avait gardé sa coiffure ordinaire avait planté dans ses cheveux noirs une belle plume de coq mordorée. D'autres femmes de divers villages avaient disposé sous leurs colliers, par derrière, une touffe de feuilles s'élargissant en éventail vers la tête. D'autres encore avaient des feuilles à la taille par derrière, le bouquet commençant entre la peau et la ceinture des hanches et s'épanouissant plus haut.

Au lieu des deux couteaux de parade ou *ipapaka*, il y en avait qui tenaient à la main droite une espèce de chasse-mouche, le *nkesi*, composé d'une queue de singe emmanchée sur une baguette (fourrure brun clair, touffe blanche à l'extrémité avec des pointes noires). Cet objet avait tout-à-fait l'air, quand on ne l'examinait pas attentivement, d'un grand éventail de plumes à demi refermé. D'autres avaient en mains le *bota 'ngila*, grand arc de parade recouvert de fourrure de singe noir.

B. LE PAGNE COURT DES FEMMES

Composé d'une bande rectangulaire d'étoffe drapée autour de la taille, il comportait de multiples variations :

1. *L'isuma*. — Ceinture bayadère couvrant la nudité par derrière, et venant se nouer par devant. Costume porté par plusieurs fillettes de Bayelo. Les pans de tissu étaient remplacés par une peau de chat sauvage chez une ou deux femmes âgées.

2. *L'ekende*. — Pagne ouvert sur le côté, porté surtout par les jeunes filles. Il allait de la taille jusqu'au-dessous de la naissance des cuisses. Très étroit, ses extrémités ne se recouvraient pas et laissaient à nu, au cours de la danse, un triangle de quelques centimètres de base à la cuisse.

3. *Le bompoko*. — Pagne croisé, drapé sur le devant ou sur le côté. Tantôt aussi court que le pagne

ouvert, tantôt s'arrêtant à mi-cuisse ou même juste au-dessus du genou. Costume le plus commun chez les femmes. Également porté par des jeunes filles et des enfants.

Ce genre de pagne, souvent en raphia teint de *ngula*, était aussi confectionné en tissu de traite uni ou à dessins. Noté chez une jeune fille de Duanema un pagne en raphia à carreaux foncés.

Au-dessus du pagne court et servant à le fixer, on voyait une ou deux *bonyama*, ceintures en peau d'antilope ou de singe noir (fourrure à l'extérieur), et de une à quatre *ekuma ya bēla*, ceintures de petites perles multicolores. Remarqué deux ceintures importées en cuir verni noir, l'une chez les Batitu, et l'autre chez une jeune fille de Nkao.

Quelques-unes des jeunes filles et des enfants avaient accroché à leur ceinture une ou deux peaux de chats sauvages. Quand il s'agissait d'une peau unique, les filles de Loma, de Nkao et de Duanema la plaçaient derrière à la façon d'une queue, tandis que celles de Bayelo la mettaient devant. Parmi les femmes il y en avait qui exhibaient jusqu'à cinq peaux pendant tout autour de la taille. De plus, les danseuses (surtout les enfants) portaient souvent à la ceinture des *lopambu*, clochettes importées en cuivre, des *yengele*, clochettes indigènes en fer, de petites pièces de monnaie à trou, dites *inkuta*, et des cartouches en cuivre jaune, dites *belopo*.

Chez un petit nombre de jeunes filles (deux ou trois dans chaque village, excepté à Loma où il y en avait davantage), on voyait une *eto*, bande très serrée de 3 ou 4 cm. de large, en peau d'antilope ou en tissu, placée autour du corps à la naissance des seins. Cette bande retenait sur le devant, dans quatre cas, un volant en tissu de traite couvrant les seins.

Peu de colliers en laiton (pas du tout chez les Batitu qui en général avaient moins de bijoux que les autres), mais au moins trois colliers de verroterie, ceux en grosses perles de faïence bleu foncé, *bokoli w'akay*, dont nous avons déjà parlé, étant les plus estimés. Aucun mauvais goût dans le choix et l'assemblage de ces ornements. En plus des colliers, les fillettes de Bayelo avaient souvent plusieurs rangées de petites perles multi-

colores, posées en bandoulière simple ou bien en double bandoulière de façon à se croiser au milieu de la poitrine et au milieu du dos.

Peu de bracelets de poignet ou de cheville en laiton. Quelques bracelets de poignets en petites perles multicolores. Chez plusieurs filles de Loma, Duanema et Nkao, un bracelet de cheville en *bayoko* (fruits séchés).

Pas remarqué beaucoup de peinture complète du corps avec le pagne court, sauf chez les vieilles à ceinture bayadère. Citons cependant le cas d'une grosse femme d'une trentaine d'années, du village de Bayelo, qui s'était enduite d'*eyongo*, argile blanche, produisant l'effet que l'on devine.

La peinture du visage et des membres se rencontrait surtout chez les gens de Bayelo. En dehors du *ngula* (rouge végétal), ils emploient l'*eyongo* (argile blanche), le *boono* (argile jaune), le *boon'a'tumbo* (argile jaune cuite et réduite à l'état de poudre brune), une poudre de teinte orangée provenant d'un mélange de *ngula* et d'argile jaune, ainsi que le *boliyo*, poudre bleue d'origine non déterminée, le tout mélangé ou non à l'huile de palme. Certaines danseuses avaient la figure toute rouge ou toute brune, les jambes quelquefois de même couleur du genou à la cheville, un petit trait blanc pouvant souligner le commencement et la fin de ces jambières de fantaisie. D'autres avaient une espèce de "loup" jaune, brun ou orangé, bordé de blanc, peint sur le visage. D'autres encore, les yeux entourés d'un cercle blanc agrémenté ou non d'un pointillé blanc disposé en arc de cercle concentrique sur le front; d'autres enfin, le front blanc avec une ligne verticale bleue en son milieu.

Dans les diverses décorations faciales ou autres, le bleu n'apparaissait jamais qu'en lignes verticales ou en petits traits parallèles; on voyait le blanc surtout en bordure, en pointillé, ou en lignes (une femme de Bayelo avait imité sur ses jambes, en cette couleur, un dessin de vannerie assez compliqué); les autres couleurs étaient toujours étendues en nappes.

Aucune danseuse ne portait de pagne long, dit *inkeke*, ni de corsage, ces deux articles étant jugés incompatibles avec les danses d'autrefois.

C. UN COSTUME DÉRIVÉ DE L'ANCIEN COSTUME DES HOMMES NKUNDU

Porté par un certain nombre des danseurs de Nkao, il se composait de deux parties :

1. *Le bonkate*. — Pagne semblable à celui que portent encore les chefs de terres de Loma et de Lokongo, et pas mal de vieux notables Nkundu. Ce pagne très large, en raphia teint de *ngula* ou en tissu de traite, est disposé dans le sens de la longueur. Il va de la taille jusqu'à mi-cuisse, en passant entre les jambes de façon à former une espèce de jupe-culotte bouffante vu de face, bien qu'il découvre les jambes en un triangle plus ou moins étroit de chaque côté.

2. *L'enkata'mbende*. — Lanière étroite en peau d'antilope retenant le pagne à la ceinture, et en laissant retomber les extrémités en un volant de 10 à 30 cm.

Les hommes avaient supprimé, peut-être en raison de la chaleur développée par la danse, le corselet ou grande ceinture en peau d'antilope, ainsi que la bandoulière de peau (ou de cuir dépouillé de sa fourrure) retenant l'étui à couteau en bois. Cependant, l'un d'entre eux avait une ceinture de 10 cm. environ avec un tout petit volant en crête. Deux danseurs avaient sur la tête une espèce de bonnet de nuit, en fibre tressée de couleur sombre vaguement passée au *ngula* ; l'un d'eux portait sur le devant de cette coiffure l'*isesi*, plat de cuivre des notables.

Nous parlerons plus loin des diverses décorations et parures des hommes, vu qu'aucune d'entre elles n'avait l'air de s'attacher particulièrement à tel ou tel costume.

D. LE PAGNE COURT DES HOMMES

Aussi varié que celui des femmes dans le cas des petits garçons. Noté :

1. *Pagne ouvert sur le côté*, porté par un petit danseur dont il couvrait à peine la nudité.

2. *Pagne noué derrière le cou* et arrivant jusqu'au genou, porté par un autre petit danseur.

3. *Pagne croisé*, dit *inkonakutu*, porté par la majorité des danseurs de tous âges. Ce genre de vêtement, semblable au *bompoko* des femmes, s'arrêtait à mi-cuisse chez un individu, mais en

général couvrait nettement le genou ou s'arrêtait à mi-jambe. Tantôt enroulé autour de la ceinture étroite de manière à former torsade à la taille, tantôt débordant en un minuscule volant.

Un ou deux cas de peinture du corps au *ngula*. Quelques danseurs au visage barbouillé de noir. Pas de coloriage facial ou corporel par bandes ou par lignes, comme chez les femmes, mais de petits motifs symétriques en forme de V, d'étoile, de rosace, etc., obtenus au moyen de points, ou bien de points mélangés de traits. Ces motifs, blancs ou multicolores, apparaissaient sur le front, le nez, les joues, le menton, le milieu de la poitrine, ou bien formaient un grand collier qui débordait quelquefois les épaules.

Presque pas de bijoux. Deux ou trois individus à colliers de grosses perles *bakay* entremêlées de dents de léopard. Un homme avec un *beye*, bracelet de cheville en laiton, un autre avec un *nsuke*, bracelet de poignet en laiton.

Tous les danseurs brandissaient de la main gauche leur *bota*, grand arc de parade recouvert ou non de peau de bête (*bota'nkoi*, recouvert de peau de léopard ; *bota'ngila*, recouvert de peau de singe), en même temps qu'une poignée de flèches aux plumes de diverses couleurs. Presque tous avaient à la main droite une lance de jet de 1 m. 50 à 2 m. 50 de long, ornementée de fil de laiton enroulé en spirale, qu'ils tenaient le fer en bas, ou bien un *lwaka*, grand couteau à lame de 30 cm. environ, presque triangulaire, décorée ou non d'une ligne blanche parallèle aux bords, ou encore un *inguna*, espèce de coutelas dont la lame d'une quarantaine de centimètres de long, très élargie à son extrémité, se terminait en arc de cercle, les deux bords s'évasant également en arc de cercle. Cette dernière arme de parade, toujours garnie de lignes blanches soulignant les bords et de lignes plus ou moins longues dans le sens de la longueur, avait quelquefois en plus une ligne blanche soulignant l'extrémité.

Pour la *longenia*, quelques danseurs s'étaient contentés de se débarrasser de leur chemise ou de leur veste et se trémoussaient en culotte courte, la taille garnie d'un bouquet de feuilles par derrière. Les autres étaient en pagne court ou s'arrêtant à la cheville. Plusieurs avaient une

étroite bande de tissu autour de la tête. La plupart avaient en main des arcs plus petits que ceux décrits précédemment et des lances à bois beaucoup moins long (1 m. à 1 m. 50), non ornementées, ou bien de petits couteaux de la dimension de

ceux des femmes, ou encore des espèces de cannes grêles d'un mètre de longueur environ. Beaucoup de danseurs portaient un *nsuke*, bracelet en cuivre, au poignet droit.

LAND TENURE AMONG THE AKAMBA

H. E. LAMBERT

This tribe inhabits the Machakos district of Kenya Colony. Professor Lindblom in his book The Akamba published in 1920 devotes only one page to land tenure. A much fuller and more detailed account of land tenure for this sociological aspect is presented herewith.

A brief account of the tribal organisation is necessary to act as a background to the sociological setting of land tenure among the Kamba.

A. The Kinship system

The Kamba of Machakos divide themselves into a number of genealogical sections which may be called parent clans. Each section believes itself to be essentially of one patrilineal blood, that is to say, to have a common male ancestor.

The following is a list of the parent clans now found in Machakos. It is not necessarily entirely exhaustive. Many of these parent clans occur also in the Kitui District. The parent clans are totemic, but the totems of some of them tend to be forgotten. I met several intelligent elders who could not tell me their totems.

PARENT CLAN	ALTERNATIVE NAMES	TOTEM
1. ATANGWA	Abethanze, Abamulia ¹	Mbulusia (Hawk)
2. EOMBE	Abandui, Abanthoka	Nguli (Baboon)
3. ATHANGA BANTHI	Abelia	Kilia (Ironstone)
4. AL (G) WANI	Abambuthu	Ngo (Leopard)
5. AMUUNDA	Abausi, Bamaongo	Luma (Anteater)
6. EYENI	Abamwili, Abanthengo	
7. AKITUTU	Abandewa, Abangai	
8. AKITONDO	Abambuli	Ngunguu (Crow)

¹ The prefix *a* denotes the personal plural. The singular prefix is *mu*. Thus "a person of the Atangwa" is Mutangwa, of the Eombe, Muiombe, and so on. *Ba* denotes "people of, descendants of", and *Aba* "people of the people", thus Abethanze, "people of the stock of Ithanze". *Mba*, having the prefix *n*, is the collective form, "the people of So-and-so considered as an entity". This collective form is found with other substantives, e.g., *asili*, judges, *nsili*, judges as a group, a bench.

9. ATUI	Abanzunzu, Mbamutuoki	Mbiti (Hyaena)
10. AMUMONI	Abandii	Mumo (Fig Tree)
11. AMUTEI		Ndei (Vulture)
12. ASII	Abasuma	Munyambu (Lion)
13. AMBUA	Abambula	Mbua (Rain)
14. ANZIU	Abamuthike	Kindali (Partridge)
15. ANZAUNI	Mbamung'ethia, Abandene	Mbewa (Jackal)
16. AUINI		
17. AMWEI	Abakithi	Mwei (Moon) ?
18. AKANGA		
19. ANGWINA		
20. EKUWA		
21. AKIIMEI		
22. AKITHUMBF	Mbakathumbe	
23. ANZI		
24. AEI (AEINI)		

Other names are sometimes given as those of parent clans, but they appear to designate sub-divisions of parent clans already in the foregoing list. Thus the Amui, with the lion as their totem, are said to be a sub-division of the *Asii*. Similarly *Amiwa* is said to have belonged originally to *Amuunda*, and *Akituo* to *Atangwa*.

Several of the parent clans are small, at any rate in western Kamba. For example, *Aei* and *Anzi* are practically unknown near Machakos, but occur in Kikumbuliu and Kitui. *Aei*, also called *Mbakeimu*, is said to be a branch of *Amumoni*.

The alternative names given in the list are those more particularly used by the women of several parent clans in special circumstances. There appears to be some confusion between totemistic and other prohibitions, so that one parent clan may seem to have two totems. Thus the Eombe may not eat *nthawaya* (bush buck), and the Ethanga may not touch *yumba* (potter's clay). Each of these is sometimes named as the totem of the parent clan concerned.

As is usual with the Eastern Bantu no very precise distinction in nomenclature is made between the various extensions of the family. The word *mbai* (cf. Kikuyu *mbari*) is used of a parent clan, a major sub-division of a parent clan, or an extended family. Its upper limit may be said to be "people, race", and its lower limit "family". One elder

whom I asked to tell me his *mbai* replied: "Mukamba". Similarly the prefix *ba*, *aba*, *mba* can refer to any kinship group short of the whole tribe. Thus *mbangania* means "So-and-so's descendants, So-and-so's people", and *Mbatangwa* means the parent clan of the Atangwa considered collectively. Important implications of function are discoverable from the context, not from the name itself; thus a kinship group referred to as *mbai* may or may not be exogamous; if it is not, there are sub-divisions of it, also called *mbai*, which are. *Mba* is also used independently as a substantive meaning "family group". Another word used for the family group, that is, the kinship living within one *boma*, is *muvia*—the *v* is bilabial—which is etymologically the same as the Kikuyu *muhiriga* and means originally the entrance through the stockade. In Kikuyu the word has had its meaning extended very widely; a *muhiriga* is a wider kinship than an *mbari*, whereas in Kamba a *muvia* is generally narrower than an *mbai*.

The parent clans in general are very much scattered, and sections of any of the larger parent clans can probably be found in Ulu, Kikumbuliu, Kitui and Mumoni and anywhere else the Kamba have taken root, such as in Digo District and parts of Tanganyika. *Mbai*—scattering, indeed, is not limited to the tribe. The Anziu of the Kamba and

the Anjiru of the Kikuyu are obviously probably identifiable, as are the Kamba Ambua and the Kikuyu Ambura. These identifications, are recognised by the Kamba. Less obvious are the frequent identification by both tribes of the Kamba Atangwa with the Kikuyu Achera, and the occasional identification of the Kamba Eombe with the Kikuyu Agachiku, and of the Kamba Asii with the Kikuyu Angari. I have also heard this last identified with the Aigwani by a Mui-gwani "because they are the people of the Leopard and our totem is the leopard".

Certain of the smaller parent clans, however, are more restricted territorially. Some of them may represent infiltrations from other tribes. Such are the Angoki and the Kana of Mumoni; the former may be Meru in origin, and the latter Meru or Tharaka¹.

But the scattering of most of the parent clans is so complete that a kinship group in any one continuous area is usually an extended family of a few generations only. The Kamba explanation of this fact is not perhaps quite adequate, but it certainly becomes so if we assume a distant change from matrilineal to patrilineal practices, and there is evidence that the change occurred. The Kamba story is that when they immigrated into Ulu their first settlement of any duration was in the Mbooni range where they were more or less confined by the threat of Masai raids or raids by some other warlike and powerful people who dominated the plains. The Kamba had to depend more on agriculture than hitherto and the settlement, temporarily restricted to an area not large enough to produce a livelihood by hunting, began to appreciate the value of the land for cultivation. This was the beginning of the land-kin synthesis so far as the Kamba were concerned. It is said that the original holdings of the parent clans of most of them are still recognisable in the vicinity of Mbooni by their names. This reminds one of the assertion by some of the Kikuyu that there are nine flats of land at Mukurue wa Gathanga (the "birth-place" of their tribe) which were the

original holdings of the founders of the nine Kikuyu major clans. The following list illustrates the Kamba statement, all the places named being actual areas:

<i>Parent Clan</i>	<i>Original Holding in Vicinity of Mbooni</i>
Atangwa	Utangwa
Eombe	Kiombe
Ai (g) wani	I (g) wani
Amuunda	Muundani
Eyeni	Iyeni
Akitutu	Kitutu
Akitondo	Kitondo
Atui	Utui, Kitui
Amumoni	Kaumoni
Asii	Kisii, Masii
Anziu	Kianziu
Anzauni	Kisau
Auini	Eilui
Akanga	Ukanga
Ekuuwa	Ikuuwa
Akiime	Kiime

THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

It was the custom, whenever it seemed safe enough, to hunt for game as an addition to an otherwise scanty or rather dull larder. During such an expedition an individual with a newly-acquired desire for good agricultural land might note a piece of bush-land that he thought fertile. When opportunity occurred, preferably when the rains had started, he would go back and demarcate the area and claim it as his piece of arable (*ng'undu*). Such claims were respected, and in time the search for good land intensified and the finders included bits of grazing to be used as home pastures. As the population pressure in the original settlements increased, such pioneers would move to their newly discovered farms, and group themselves into settlements strong enough to put up a reasonable defence against aggression. Such new settlements were mixed in origin, and a number of new *mbai* would arise in each; the individual founder of a new *mbai* would retain his loyalty to his parent clan and to his totem, but his social milieu would be based on joint

¹ Kana is sometimes identified with Aei. The Tharaka clan Ndegi may be the same in origin. Ndegi is the collective form; put into the personal it would be Aregi, or, in Kamba, Aei.

defence and mutual assistance rather than on kinship. For the immediate practical concerns of everyday life the *utui* (a group of homesteads territorially compact) replaced the kinship group. It was, moreover, self-contained; a man could find a wife inside it, for it consisted of mixed kinship; a water supply was near at hand and arable and grazing land available. The *utui* was now a tribe in miniature, self-supporting, socially and economically complete; it had no need of contact with the outside world except to meet or start aggression to protect its herds or to make additions to them. A spiritual continuity based on kinship and a mystic loyalty to the totem were maintained by intercourse between the parent clan and its various offspring clans, but even this was economically unnecessary.

It was this mode of hiving-off and resettlement in smaller units socially and politically self-contained which set the pattern for the future evolution of the tribe. Its results are evident to-day. Each *utui* is an independent unit; it has its own men's club (*kisuka*), its own recreation ground (*kituto*), its own administration (*nzama*) with its own bench of magistrates (*asili*), its own standing army and its own war leaders (*athiani*), and its own place of worship, or rather of entreaty (*kitonyeo kia kiang'onde*). The Machakos Kamba never developed anything in the nature of a central authority and it devolved on the British to do it, however inadequately, for them. Left to themselves, however, the Kamba might eventually have done so, for the seed of such a development was in their system.

This picture of the Kamba organisation is no doubt too formal, too clear-cut; blurred edges are a characteristic of any Bantu institution. But it is essentially true to life, a faithful picture, though in viewing it we have held ourselves sufficiently aloof to miss the blurring. If we take a closer view we shall see that there is some degree of overlap between any one *utui* and its neighbours. A man who lives near the boundary (not necessarily well defined) between two *motui* may name either as his unit. A *kisuka* or *kituto* may be shared by two or more *motui* which otherwise regard themselves as separate units; disputes

sometimes arise between people living close together but in different *motui*, and a joint *nzama* of the two will deal with them; the *asili* of one *utui* are frequently invited to assist the *nzama* of another; intermarriage between distinct but neighbouring *motui* is very common.

This overlap and blurring find expression in a larger size of unit sufficiently cohesive to be recognised and named. This is the *kibalo* (or *mbalo*), a grouping of *motui* between which social intercourse, particularly intermarriage, is pronounced enough to create a sense of common interest. Formerly a fighting unit was frequently based on the *kibalo*, and nowadays a *kibalo* uses at times a common recreation ground for dancing during the hours of daylight by young people from all its *motui* and has a common place of worship (sacred grove, *ithembo*, pl. *mathembo*) where the suppliant elders, male and female, (*athembi*, *atumia ma ithembo*, *iveti sia ithembo*) of the various *motui* join in sacrifice to the ancestral spirits (*aimu*, sing. *eimu*) and in occasional entreaty of a vague and universal God (*mulungu*, *ngai*). (There is some lack of distinction between the High God and the ancestral spirits in the average Kamba mind. Some elders assert that the ceremonies at the *ithembo* and *kitonyeo kia ng'onde* have nothing to do with the *aimu* but only with *mulungu*. But *mulungu*, in the minds of many elders, denotes the supernatural—witchcraft is not exactly supernatural, but rather an evil development of human knowledge and experience—and consequently includes the *aimu*. The former assert that the *aimu* are personal to the family or extended family, and communion with them cannot be treated as a function of public or communal sacrifice. Possibly some greater degree of individual personality has been imported into the conception of *mulungu* by comparison with the Mahomedan and Christian Gods.

The elders illustrate the difference between a *kitonyeo kia ng'onde* and an *ithembo* by referring to the different practices in regard to threats of pestilence and famine. When news is received that an epidemic is spreading towards them all the people of an *utui* gather at the *kitonyei* and are ceremonially blessed and sprinkled with a mixture

containing the stomach contents of a sacrificial sheep, but prayers for rain are offered at the *ithembo* of a *kibalo* by a few (six to ten) of the *atumia* and *iveti* of the *ithembo*, the general public not attending. I suspect that in practice there is no hard and fast distinction between a *kitonyeo* and an *ithembo* any more than there is indeed between an *utui* and a *kibalo*; the latter are, however, terms convenient to the Kamba and ourselves to designate a narrower and a wider unit whose constitutional differences, though recognised, cannot be defined with great precision in differentiated functions.

As there is some degree of overlap between *motui* so, in thickly populated country, there is some overlap between *ibalo*. But no unit of territory larger than the *kibalo* has a generic name. All larger areas are simply referred to as *nthi*, which merely means "country". An *nthi* may have a specific name, but there is no social unity or political institution exclusively belonging to it, except where such has been created by Government (as in locations and sub-locations). *Iveti*, for instance, is now a location with delineated boundaries and a Chief. Formerly it was an *nthi* with no administrative unity; a man who said he came from *Iveti* would not imply that he had any particular regard for or any feeling of common interest with the inhabitants of *Iveti* other than those of his own *kibalo* or *ntui*, though he would certainly know them better than those of any more distant *nthi*.

This, however, does not mean that there were no unifying forces of wider scope than the *kibalo*. In organised East African tribes, apart from the sense of unity created by a common language and essentially common customs, there are three kinds of unifying force, institutional, situational, and individual. In Meru, where the social and political systems are largely based on kinship, there are two institutions which, cutting across the ever-widening circles of the various kinships, tend to hold the tribe together. One is the organisation of the internal government into lodges having no regard for kinship (so that the governing body of every kinship is united in one lodge with those of many others), and the other is the grading

into age-sets based on circumcision. In Kikuyu also there are two unifying institutions, government by generation sequence and grading into ages based on circumcision. Such institutions, cutting horizontally, as it were, across the vertical lines of descent in kinship, tend to unify the tribe. A man's outlook is conditioned not by his status in a kinship only, but also by his status in an institution which runs all through the tribe. They are the skewers, so to speak, which bind the ever-widening circles of a round of beef together.

The Kamba as a tribe are not so well off in unifying institutions. The political unit is the *utui*, of which the unity is based on common residence, not on common kinship, and therefore not on common ownership. There is scarcely any form of government based on lodges with a wider area of jurisdiction than the *kibalo*, and there is no government by generation sequence. Though there is a ceremonial of initiation (*nzaiko*), including circumcision, the age-group (*nthuke*, *iika*) is not dependent on it and the division of adult males into ages (*aanake*), young men, *nthela*, young married men, and *atumia*, elders) is somewhat indistinct; the age depends on function rather than the function on the age, and the division into ages has little if any unifying power. In Kamba it is the kinship system which cuts across the *motui* organisation and runs all through the tribe. It has a certain binding force because there is still a spiritual loyalty to the parent clan and to the totem.

The differences between the three tribes cited for comparison are not quite so clear cut as the foregoing might suggest. In Kikuyu also and less obviously in Meru, the kinship system runs all through the tribe, but the political emphasis, particularly in Meru, is on the land-kin synthesis so far as kinship is concerned; in Kamba the synthesis is politically of little consequence.

In Meru not only does the age-set (*nthuke*) cut across the kinship group (*mwiriga*) but it cuts across the administrative caucuses (*njuri*) also. There are, as it were, three axes, each cutting across the other two, and an individual's status is defined by three co-ordinates relative to these. His attitude is three-dimensional. In

Kikuyu also the age-set (*irua*, *riika*) cuts across the administrative generation (*riika ria Maina* etc.) as well as through the kinship group (*mbari*), and the individual's attitude is three-dimensional. But in Kamba the administrative system is largely bounded by the *utui* and the age-set scarcely counts outside it; the individual's attitude is definable in reference to his *utui* and his *mbai*. If the Kamba's attitude is three-dimensional it is in respect of his *utui* and occasionally of his *kibalo*, never of the tribe. To the latter his attitude is one-dimensional.

Various factors (predominantly the recent clash of cultures) have tended to reduce the loyalties pertaining to the different institutions. A three-dimensional solidity assumes a two-dimensional quality of little depth; the individual attitude is on the surface, shallow. This is very evident in Kikuyu (except perhaps in Gichugu and Ndia). The administrative sequence has almost faded out, and there is now a rapidly diminishing loyalty to the other two institutions; the land-kin synthesis is breaking and the traditional respect for seniority in age-set will soon, apparently, have vanished. When the final stage is reached the individual's status will be defined by no co-ordinates, his attitude will be non-dimensional, and the out-and-out Kikuyu egotist will have emerged, unless some new loyalty or set of loyalties arises to retain him spiritually within the herd. Much the same thing is happening institutionally in the Kamba *utui*; if there were no *utui* oath (and even that is losing its potency) the *utui* would probably end as a congeries of individualists whose only common interest was a common residence. As for the Kamba tribe, already one-dimensional, a further weakening of the kinship bond, of which the signs are by no means lacking, will leave the individual tribesman non-existent tribally; his *utui* will still convey some meaning to him, but his tribe will not. The Kamba "tribe" will then be a tribe no longer, but a miscellany of independent, self-sufficing parishes unrelated to a county or a country (the *nthi* of the Kamba). That, at least, is what would happen if Government or the situation did not intervene to create a unity which

the Kamba, left to themselves in the new conditions, would have found it difficult to attain. The probability is that they would not have tried.

Nowadays the Government and the situation are much the same. Formerly the need to meet a situation in concerted action could unite a number of independent *motui* or *ibalo* into a wider unit whose cohesion would remain so long as the situation lasted, but generally no longer. An exceptionally severe and lengthy drought would turn the minds of the elders over a wide area to the traditional practices of earlier days when the tribal pattern was based on kinship groups each with a special function in relation to the whole. The Ambua ("the People of the Rain") had failed in their official duty as controllers of precipitation and human sacrifices would have to be resorted to. The Priestly clan, the Anziu ("the Blacks"), concerned with tribal sacrifices, would be called on to perform it. If possible a young girl of another tribe would be kidnapped and sacrificed by burial alive; otherwise the Ambua would have to provide a girl, and the tribe, or the portion of it most concerned, would compensate the mother; some elders say that the Anziu sacrificed a girl of their own; hence the alternative name (Abamuthike, "people of the buried one") sometimes used by the women of this parent clan. There was thus a temporary unity based on an ancient tribal custom, but the unity had been invoked by a widespread situation and would end when the situation ended. Each such act, however, would revive the memory of common origin and common custom and help to keep a tribal loyalty alive.

War was another situation which could unite a number of *ibalo*. Persistent aggression against an area by an enemy force stronger than the army that a single *utui* or *kibalo* could put into the field would be met by a joint defence to prevent the smaller units from annihilation in piecemeal operations. There was an *ad hoc* binding of the units by an oath of allegiance sworn by the warriors of them all. A hole was dug in the ground and seven arrows placed round it with their heads pointing to the centre.¹ Every warrior then spat

¹ Seven is the most important of the "sacred numbers"

into the hole, swearing not to desert his new comrades. But when the situation ceased the alliance ceased as well.

Another situation which could create a temporary unity of purpose over a wide area was the judicial killing of a persistent evil-doer. The decision to impose such capital punishment and the execution of it were the respective functions of a joint *nzama* and a joint executive (called *king'oli* when convened for this particular purpose).

Certain events arising from the customs common to the tribe would occasionally lead to situations with some degree of unifying force. Such events were institutional in origin but sporadic and situational in operation. Dances in connection with the initiation (*nzaiko*) rites afford an instance.

Another type of bond, the economic, was situational in character although it expressed itself particularly in an economic institution of considerable continuity and permanence. This institution was the market (*king'ang'a*, pl. *ing'ang'a*).

It was not restricted to the *utui* or the *kibalo*. In normal times it was regularly attended by the people, especially women, living over a much wider area. But its unifying influence was not so great as might reasonably be expected. It was essentially a place where commodities could be obtained and family shortages made up in exchange for family surpluses. Though there was a constant buzz of conversation most of it was due to haggling and had no political significance. Even tribes persistently at enmity with one another frequently maintained a common marketplace for peaceful barter so that they could satisfy their several economic needs. There was an obvious mutual advantage in the institution but the attitude of the individual *utui* to the *king'ang'a* was entirely selfish.

Nowadays the most important situation to the Kamba are those created by the Government. The most obvious are those imposed by the system of administration and instruction adopted and is usually avoided. The use of the indeclinable *mwanza*, seven, in place of an original declinable word, now apparently forgotten, is itself an instance of such avoidance.

by the Government. The functions of the District and departmental officers, the Chiefs, the Local Native Council and the Native Tribunals are outstanding; they all have a unifying force because their areas of jurisdiction are wider than any territorial unit contemplated as a political entity in the untouched Kamba system. The Local Native Council and the Native Tribunals, being a local government and a local judiciary, were intended by the Government to be institutional. But, as envisaged by the average Kamba, they, like the Chiefs and like the Government itself, are situational. But they have their unifying power, and this power is persistent because they themselves persist and continue to perform their functions. In time, with a guaranteed persistence, they will probably develop into institutions. But whether they will be institutions satisfying to the Kamba and whether unifying power will suffice to substitute a tribal outlook (in regard to land control, for instance) for the present tendency to think parochially and the trend towards an anti-social form of individualism are other matters. They were not outgrowths of Kamba ethos, though they were certainly constituted, at least in part, as imitations of imaginary extensions of the Kamba system. But the imagination was somewhat faulty, and the extension imitated were Europeomorphic, not so much in constitution as in practice and procedure.

Other Government-created situations occasionally unite the people of the area affected in a common purpose. Destocking campaigns and prohibitions against grazing stock outside the demarcated tribal lands are instances. The reaction to such a situation has, however, hitherto been entirely negative. It has been an opposition to a situation, not a constructive tribal effort to overcome the threat which led the Government to create the situation. It is a spurious unity intended to promote their selfish ends despite the common danger. Objection to a method (as, for instance, of de-stocking) is often justifiable, but, if the premises are admitted, not unless an alternative, equally effective and readily undertaken, is offered by the opposition.

As to the individual type of unifying force, in

the past various personalities have exercised an influence far beyond their own *motui* by reason of their quality as leaders. Among the Kamba, as among other peoples, men are occasionally born with an outstanding gift of leadership and such men have undoubtedly helped to preserve or to create loyalties to units wider than the *utui*. Kivoi, the friend of Krapf, and Masaku, after whom Machakos is named, appear to be men of this sort. Of greater permanency and therefore more importance are the threads of personality which permeate the tribe continuously, because the Kamba have a deep regard for individual prowess and individual erudition, indeed for every form of individual achievement other than the anti-social. The reputation of a particularly successful medicine man (*mundu mue*) is not confined to his own *utui* or *kibalo*. Wealth (as expressed in wives and cattle) commands widespread respect. Functionally the most important aspect of this principle of personality-spread is that concerned with the judicial system. Judges famous for their knowledge of customary law, their skill in the interpretation of it in individual cases, and their wide acquaintance with accepted precedents, are frequently invited to assist the local courts, and may come from distant places for the purpose. Expert advocates may similarly be called in by the parties to a suit. Such practices tend to unify the tribe by maintaining a unity of law and custom.

A wealthy man may sometimes satisfy his vanity and enhance his reputation by giving an enormous party to which he may invite all the important personages over a wide area. This may be in celebration of some particular event in the family, such as his own preferment in the *nzama* or his senior wife's initiation as a *kiveti* *kia ithemgo*, and the young people for miles round may receive a general invitation to come and dance and take refreshments at the host's expense. Such a dance is distinguished from the ordinary *utui* or *kibalo* dance by being called *mboka* instead of *wathi*. Such parties make for friendly intercourse and understanding over an area larger than the *kibalo*, and may lead to inter-marriage between *mbai* in widely separated units.

In tribes whose political systems are based on extensive kinship settlements intermarriage is a potent unifying influence of the individual type. But in Kamba, where the political unit is self-contained in kinship units which can intermarry, it has a relatively insignificant force in practice. Young men can find their dancing-partners, girl-friends, and potential wives next door; they need not leave their units to go and look for them elsewhere. This, however, is not to say that they never do. None the less it is comparatively rarely that they go outside their own *ibalo*, and one of the most intense forces of cohesion in the *kibalo* is the frequent intermarriage between its several *motui*.

One other unifying force of the individual type which merits notice is the Kamba treatment of their cattle. It is only rarely that a man keeps all his cattle together in one place, and a wealthy family may have its herds very widely scattered. This has a unifying influence because such a family, based on one *utui*, may have interests and even portions of itself (junior wives or sons, for instance) in many others. It is the scattering which creates the unifying influences, not a subconscious sense of the need of unity which creates the scattering; but some pre-existing sense of unity must be inferred, for otherwise the scattering could not occur with safety. No doubt the practice has its origin in the principle that it is unwise to have all one's eggs in one basket. What the Kamba feared were deaths from local droughts and localised disease; they also feared compulsory de-stocking—by the Masai. These same fears persist to-day, except that for the Masai we must substitute the Government.

The mere existence of a common grazing-ground had little unifying power. For the common grazing was not regarded strictly as a commonage; its tenure was not communal. It was rather in the nature of a no-man's-land, the use of which, as pressure on it grew more and more intense, would set up rivalries between the users rather than create a sense of unity of interest in use.

It is thus evident that the Kamba were badly off for unifying forces. The mode of settlement tended to disintegrate the tribe because the dis-

crete elements collected into units (the *motui*) which were self-contained and almost independent statelets. The only institutional bond continuously in operation consisted of the threads of kinship running through the whole. Apart from this and the natural sense of unity arising from a similarity of speech and customs and tradition, the only binding forces were temporary and, in general, localised. They were situational and personal. There was no continuous central government, and even in comparatively small areas any form of government with a jurisdiction wider than the *kibalo* was entirely situational and temporary. None the less the principles of government were easily capable of extension to cover any area. The significance of this fact will be evident when the setting up of land authorities is discussed.

We are now in a position to define, or rather to describe succinctly, since any exactitude in definition is impossible, the various social and political units which are concerned in the Kamba system of land tenure.

An *mbai* (pl. *mbai*) is a kinship group of any size from the tribe down to the *muvia*. For some considerable time the kinship group has been patrilineal in pattern and marriage patrilocal. The parent clans, the names of which are still remembered and associated each with its own exclusive totem, may have been matrilineal. No parent clan is now associated, except traditionally, with any particular area, and even in a parent clan's traditionally associated area the land owning sub-*mbai* do not exclusively or predominantly belong to it.

A *muvia* (pl. *mviva*) is an extended family, generally covering three or four generations only, that is, a man together with his sons and grandsons and their wives and families. It is a patrilineal unit. Brothers, half-brothers, and paternal cousins who have a common paternal grandfather and live together in one area are, together with their wives and children, called a *muvia*.

A *musyi* (pl. *misyi*) is the homestead of a family, multiple family, or extended family living together. It is generally surrounded by a stockade (*mathanzu*). Each wife has a separate hut. The

entrance through the stockade is the *muvia* (this brings the Kamba into line with various other tribes who call the extended family by some word which means doorway, e.g., *mlango*). Outside the *muvia* is an open space (*thome*) where the men sit, drink, and talk after the day's work. Some etiquette of seniority is observed among them. In Kitui the meaning of *thome* has been extended to denote an administrative sub-division of a location. A *musyi* may contain one hut only or a considerable number, and when a man talks of his *musyi* he may be referring to the whole *musyi* in which he lives or to his own particular portion of it, according to the context. The word *musyi* is generally mistranslated "village"; the Kamba translate it *boma* when speaking in Swahili.

The *utui* (pl. *motui*) is the political and politically territorial unit. The word is derived from *tua*, dwell. The people living in an *utui* are usually of mixed *mbai*. There is accordingly no natural bond between them requiring mutual assistance and good behaviour. An artificial bond by oath is therefore made to serve a similar purpose. The *utui* oath is of the social type (*ndundu*) as opposed to the judicial type (*kithutu*). Every new resident has to swear the *utui* oath, no matter how many *utui* oaths he may have sworn in other *motui*.

A *kibalo* (pl. *ibalo*)—also called *mbalo* (pl. *mbalo*)—is a large *utui* or group of *motui*. There is no *kibalo* oath, and except as may be required on special occasions, as in war, no oath of mutual allegiance covers the whole *kibalo*. There is generally a common place supplication (*ithembo*) and consequently some degree of religious unity between the *motui* of a *kibalo*. The *mundu muc* occasionally proclaims a special day of prayer; such a day is called *ngone*. Probably the strongest forces holding a *kibalo* together are those induced by inter-marriage and friendships arising from propinquity. Though it is scarcely reinforced by any ritual sanction the bond is functionally quite real.

The *kisuka* is the men's junior club. It is a social club whose main business is conversation during a joint meal. Its members are married

men. They pay an entrance fee in stock and honey-beer, and they attain to the various grades of seniority in the club by further payments. In a sense there may be said to be one *kisuka* for the whole tribe, as the institution is much the same all through it, and a member on a temporary visit to another *utui* may take part in its *kisuka* feast without extra payment provided his credentials satisfy the local club. This, however, is a sort of occasional reciprocation, and the *kisuka* as man institution has little if any continuous binding force between distant *motui*. This is evidenced by the fact that the word is often used in the plural (*isuka*) and then denotes the separate clubs of more than one *utui*. Inside a *kibalo* there is considerable intercourse between *utui*, but this is generally brought about by invitations to individuals. So distinct in fact are the *isuka* from one another that the Kamba sometimes name the *kisuka* as the territorial unit. If the *utui* is a large one it may have two *isuka*, and if it is a small one it may share one *kisuka* with another small *utui*. But generally speaking the word *kisuka*, in so far as it relates to land, is synonymous with *utui*. At least in Ulu the *kisuka* acts, or used to act, as the executive of the *nzama*. If this meant execution of the *nzama*'s judgement in another *utui* the two *kisuka* or junior *nzama* members sent would first report to the *nzama* there. The *nzama* of the two *motui* would probably have heard the suit jointly. In any event if the *nzama* of the *utui* where the judgement-debtor lived was satisfied as to the justice of the sentence or decree it would provide two of its own executive, *kisuka* members or two *nzama* members, to accompany the first and execute the judgement with them.

The *nzama* is the men's senior club. Its members are *atumia*, elders, including "honorary" *atumia*, childless old men. It is a social club, but it has important public functions connected with administration and judicature. The word is now used to denote the native courts created by the Government. The *nzama*'s social meetings are conducted much like those of the *kisuka*. The members sit in a circle lacking an arc. At one end sits the most senior member and at the other the most junior, the rest being in order of seniority

between the two. Seniority is determined by the number of payments made (the most junior member normally being one who has just paid his entrance fee) and is indicated by the portion of the slaughtered beast to which a member is entitled at the feast. When a man has made sufficient payments to entitle him to the choicest portion any further payment he may make will put him outside the circle. Theoretically there is a constant moving up and out so that each man acts as chairman in his turn. In practice a man who has attained the highest seat frequently refuses to make a further payment and stays there till his son removes him. There is a customary avoidance between father and son (real, not classificatory) in the *nzama* circle. Often a man will leave the circle altogether as soon as his son becomes a member (this is reminiscent of the administrative alternation of the generations among the Kikuyu, and operates in a similar though much less formal way). Sometimes a man stays on until his son has reached a seniority (by payments) which puts the son two seats below himself and then leaves the circle altogether, since one more payment by the son may put them next to one another, apparently an impossible position. That this custom actually reflects a principle of replacement of one generation by the next in social and administrative functions appears to follow from the fact that the father has no place henceforward in the circle. If he attends at all he sits outside it, takes no part in the discussion, and is lucky if he gets the bits left over after the rest are served. All that remains to him is the respect due to age. But if he is a particularly intelligent man his opinion may be sought.

It would be a mistake to infer from the foregoing description that the indigenous judicial system depended on a social club, or that an individual judge's influence and position on the bench were contingent on his ability or inclination to fill his brother justices with meat and beer. Though, other things being equal, wealth would help, personality, intelligence, knowledge of the customary law—especially of case law—and a reputation for fair dealing were the characters

that counted most. In particular, men of such qualities were chosen to represent the unit in inter-unitary affairs. The *nzama* elders were given different designations according to their functions at the moment. It was not every *mutumia wa nzama* who regularly joined the bench of justices; one who did so was called *musili* (*sila*, join in a law suit, judge a case.) The *asili* were the individual members of the bench (*nzili*), but *musili* acquired the secondary meaning of one "skilled in the law" and "a local law-giver", and so the leading personality of a unit. Nowadays the word is used by Government to denote a local personality, a sub-sub-headman. *Munene* meant "a big man, an important personage", but by no means all *anene* acquired their greatness in administrative functions; outstanding wealth and a forceful egotism would be enough. A *kibalo* was often called *kia ngania*, "of So-and-so", *ngania* being the *munene*, as an alternative to its local name. Nowadays *munene* is used for "chief, official headman". An elder who was recognised as a man of dialectic skill and convincing personality, and consequently suitable as a representative of his *utui* or as an ambassador to another *kibalo* or even a different *nthi*, was known as an *mbinga* (pl. *mbinga*), but nowadays this word has acquired for many a disreputable significance and is applied sometimes to a man who sets out secretly to stir up strife, a scandal-monger. A safer word to use for an honest representative is *mwalania* (pl. *alania*), an intermediary, a pacifier.¹

Although the *nzama* oath which the individual member swore when he was first admitted was considered valid throughout the tribe so that he was not required to swear another oath when, on invitation, he joined in the proceedings of the *nzama* of another *utui*, the *nzama* was in practice very much *utui*-bound, and if he joined the other *utui* permanently he would have to swear another oath according to the local formula, which might be slightly different.

¹ Highly respected elders are commonly distinguished from the rest by being addressed by their father's names instead of their own. Thus a man named Munubi wa Nginya, having achieved greatness, would be addressed as "E Nginya" not as "Munubi".

Altogether it may be safely said that though the average Kamba's political horizon was at no small distance his customary vision was myopic; he rarely looked beyond his own *kibalo*.

B. The System of Land Tenure

Probably the simplest approach to an understanding of the system of land tenure now obtaining among the Machakos Kamba is by way of its traditional evolution, since the tribe first occupied its present territory.

If we discount the statement of many Kamba that the tribe has always occupied its present country (which statement has possibly been reinforced by political considerations), the strongest tradition is that the tribe was at one time in Tanganyika Territory, probably in the vicinity of Kilimanjaro; there is a very considerable Kamba element in the Chaga make-up. This same tradition puts the Kamba at that time in close proximity to the Nyamwezi, from whom they subsequently parted, the Nyamwezi moving towards Lake Victoria, and the Kamba by way of the Tsavo river to the region of Chyulu. Kamba is said to be a place-name in the Nyamwezi country. This in itself means very little. But the fact that the Kamba still maintain *utani* (the so-called joking relationship or yituperative alliance) with the Nyamwezi (and apparently with no other tribe) seems to be inexplicable on any ground other than that the two tribes were in contact at one time or another. The Kamba elders actually go further, and say that the *utani* demonstrates an actual (not ritual) blood relationship; the two tribes, they suppose, were at one time one.

From Chyulu the Kamba moved to the Mbooni hills, and for a considerable period were more or less confined to that area by war-like cattle-keepers (the Masai, according to the Kamba). During this period the tribe increased comparatively rapidly and had to take more seriously than hitherto to agriculture. Here the patrilineal land-kin synthesis was developed, and here, too, probably, patrilineal marriage became the vogue. The original settlement would seem to have been by matrilineal clans, the forbears of the present parent clans, or at least of some of them.

As the holding and inheritance of land were grafted on the patrilineal kin (possibly a gradual process) the original areas of settlement of the several matriclans would become divided up between numerous patriclans each taking the name of its founder; each matriclan would then be scattered through the tribal settlement and each contain a number of recently founded patriclans. Each patriclan would retain its founder's totem and be regarded as a sub-division of his matriclan. That the parent clans were really matriclans originally is suggested by the fact that a man may marry a girl of his parent clan provided no relationship between them through the male is traditionally remembered, and that marriage was originally matrilocal is suggested by the fact that a man must obey the prohibitions of his wife's parent clan; she also must keep the rules of his, but that is "because a member of his *mbai* may be in her womb".

It would seem then that the present territorial pattern of the tribe, the scattering of kinships in relation to the land, was quite possibly established even before the spreading from Mbooni.

The next stage appears to have been an overcrowding of the original settlement. Individuals or groups of individuals braved the Masai threat and settled in the *wau* (land hitherto unoccupied except sporadically by nomads). An individual marked an area sufficient for a homestead and agricultural lands. He cut bush and branches to indicate the piece of land he claimed as his and he planted a handful of seeds of some annual food crop to show that he intended to use the land for agriculture. Other individuals did the same, and though the demarcated areas were kept distinct there was naturally a tendency to group such areas together for mutual assistance, particularly in defence. The individuals of any such new settlement were not necessarily or even ordinarily of one parent clan. This is readily understood, particularly if our conjecture as to the disintegration of parent clans in the original settlement is near the truth. Thus arose the *utu* system of residence, based on territorial proximity, not on common kinship.

The agricultural holding acquired in this manner

by an individual was his *ng'undu*. The Kamba may have had cattle when they first settled at Mbooni or they may have acquired them later possibly by theft or capture from the Masai. It is probable that when they entered the Machakos district the Kamba were mainly hunters. If they were poor in stock it would seem unlikely that the Masai would bother with them and the aggression was probably on the part of the Kamba. On the other hand this restriction to a limited territory may have been caused by fear of slave-trading caravans. However that may be, the tradition is that the first newly-demarcated lands were intended for cultivation purposes only. But later, it appears, exclusive grazing grounds were also demarcated. Such a grazing ground was called *kisese* (pl. *isese*). But the word is somewhat loosely used. The *ng'undu* holding was originally larger than the family's agricultural requirements and some of it would naturally be used for grazing; this portion, though remaining part of the *ng'undu*, was known as the *kisese*; it might be fenced to prevent livestock from encroaching on the cultivated lands. On the whole I am inclined to think that originally a *kisese* was nothing more than a cattle-pen and thence a partly fenced-off portion of a family's or extended family's *ng'undu*. In Tharaka the word *kicheche* is used with very much that meaning. This would bring the Kamba into line with the other peoples of the Province; all grazing would be communal, but the owner of a piece of land (Kik. *githaka*, *ng'undu*) could take such reasonable measures as might be necessary to protect his crops; he could also close a portion, or the whole of his grazing for any good reason, as for instance if he wished to cultivate or rest it, but such a closure would be indicated not by actual fencing but by various signs recognised by the people generally, and would apply as much to his own livestock as to theirs. This condition, however, does not appear to have been customary among the Kamba, probably because there was originally ample *wau*, that is, grazing land unclaimed by anybody, whereas the *ng'undu* was primarily agricultural land chosen and demarcated for that purpose. When a family's cattle increased in numbers so that it was inconvenient or impossible

to graze them on the uncultivated portion of the *ng'undu* they were taken to the commonage (the *weu*). A further increase would mean that it was now not even possible to house them on the *ng'undu*, which might in any case be at a considerable distance from the portion of the *weu* actually in use, and to return his herd every evening would involve the owner in a risk of damage to crops, not only his own but his neighbour's also, because good agricultural land was found in patches, particularly in the river valleys, and would have been comparatively quickly taken up. He would then establish a cattle post (*kiengo*, pl. *siengo*) in the *weu*, and either move there himself or send a son or other relative or friend to live there. He would enclose a fair sized area round the *kiengo* because it would serve him as a reserve of grazing when the *weu* grazing was getting thin in the vicinity of the *kiengo* and when, as in wet weather or when there were Masai about, it was unwise to graze them very far afield. Such an enclosure would be respected, but if the elders of the *utui* or of two or more *motui* who used the *weu* thereabouts for grazing thought he had taken more than a reasonable amount of land they would stop the fencing or pull down the fence already erected and show him where he could put it without their further disapproval. The enclosure would then be *kisese*. But a necessary condition was that he should establish a *kiengo* with a man in charge or a *musyi* for himself or for his son and daughter-in-law or other related family from the same *utui*. He could not simply demarcate an area as his own exclusive grazing to be reserved for future use. He could take enough for his reasonable immediate needs and add to it later as his needs increased provided there was land to spare, but in an area of *weu* getting overcrowded with *isese* he would very likely be required to reduce the area enclosed. As cattle became more important in the Kamba economic system family heads tended to establish their *misyi* in their own *isese*, the women going to the *ng'undu* for their agricultural work each day and returning to the *misyi* to do their household chores and spend the night. Nowadays a *musyi* is associated with a *kisese* rather than an *ng'undu*, and the elders hearing a claim for pos-

session of a *kisese* require good evidence that the claimant had a *musyi* or a *kiengo* there, occupied by himself or by somebody on his behalf.

This then is the real *kisese*. Whatever the original meaning of the word (probably nothing but a cattle kraal), it now implies an exclusive grazing area, individual or shared by neighbours, demarcated at a semi-permanent cattle post established in the *weu*. The cattle-owners or their sons or agents live there in *misyi* or *siengo*. When *misyi* are founded, which means that women live there and store their harvests there, we have the nucleus of an *utui*.

But a man may keep his cattle on his *ng'undu* and call it his *kisese*; there is a certain amount of glamour about the word *kisese*—it implies the ownership of cattle. But the moment there is some dispute about the ownership of the *ng'undu* he will call it his *ng'undu*, not *kisese*, for the title to *ng'undu* is perpetual, whereas the title to *isese* depends on user.

The sense of ownership of a *kisese* was never as strong as the sense of ownership of an *ng'undu*. The *ng'undu* was regarded as a necessity because it meant subsistence and subsistence was generally recognised as a primary right of every Kamba. But though the Kamba nowadays profess to hold the view that cattle are an absolute necessity they formerly regarded them as something of a luxury. A man could not claim a *kisese* as an individual right unless he had the cattle to make a cattle post essential. Both the new *ng'undu* and the new *kisese* had been established in the *weu*, which was no man's land, but the *weu* was usable for grazing by the tribe at large; the fundamental attitude to grazing, with the Kamba as with the other Eastern Bantu, was that it was communal; land which had never been in use for cultivation was still available for grazing by anybody's cattle. The *kisese* demarcated at a cattle-post was excluded from the *weu* just as long as it was used; a man who left his *kisese* but intended to return and use it once more could keep his claim alive by keeping an agent there or by frequent visits and reminders to the occupiers of neighbouring *isese* that he intended to return; otherwise the *kisese* reverted to the *weu*. But in theory the *ng'undu* never

reverted to the *wew*, and in practice very rarely did so. It is in this sense that the frequent definition of a *kisese* as a "temporary exclusive grazing ground" is partly justified.

This method of acquiring a new *ng'undu* or a new *kisese* is the basis of the Kamba statement that the outright sale of land was always customary among them. When an enquirer asks a Kamba elder about the traditional possibility of outright sale he is struck at once with the elder's change of countenance, at least if the elder has himself made use of the modern possibility of purchase. The usual candid and sincere expression of the average Kamba elder's face and his willingness to talk about the customs of his tribe give place to a disingenuous expression and a somewhat halting answer which sounds to the enquirer indicative of mental reservation. The reason is that the answer, when it comes, is only partly true. "From the start a man could do exactly what he liked with his own *ng'undu* or *kisese*" is literally quite true if we interpret "from the start" as meaning "at the start and in certain circumstances thereafter", but there is a quibble in the qualifying phrase "his own". The sophism is rendered possible by the fact that the precise meaning of the phrase is conditioned by the context and is not discoverable in the actual wording used. The sophisticated elder, for political or selfish reasons, generalises the particular. A man who has acquired a piece of land by excision from the *wew*, assuming that his neighbours had not objected to the demarcation of the area, could treat it as his own in every sense, subject to the one condition that he used it for its proper purpose. If one asks the elder; "Could he sell it?", the answer is: "Yes, certainly", followed after a lengthy pause by: "But he never did". In other words excision from the *wew* implied a need for land and an actual use of it. Land-grabbing for the purpose of speculation would not be countenanced, and no doubt was never even contemplated in the early settlements. In those days, in fact, acquisition was contingent on beneficial occupation. None the less the individual settler *could*, in certain circumstances, do as he liked with the land he had personally pioneered,

because that piece of land was not yet subject to either of the two conditions which, according to the usual Bantu law, could qualify his right to do so, viz., ownership impersonally extended through a kinship, user only being differentiated, and extension of the owning kinship backwards to include a generation now no longer in incarnate occupation of the land. This last, so far as the Kamba are concerned, appears to be hypothetical; there is little, if any, factual evidence to suggest that the "spiritual ownership" of land was ever powerful functionally among them, but the sense of continuity of kinship based on a common spiritual father to whom sacrifice was made would tend to reinforce the first condition. If some circumstance arose (a comparatively rare event) which induced the individual pioneer to leave the area for good he could dispose of his piece of land in any way he liked. He could give it away, or sell it (if a buyer was forthcoming), or he could leave it to his sons (dividing it between them if he preferred to do so). Theoretically he could bequeath it in any way he liked. But if he died without disposing of it he would, in a sense, continue to be the owner, and the land would then be subject to his "spiritual ownership". Henceforward his descendants would hold the land in trust; they would have the user of it, but it could never be divided up in such a formal manner that portions of it could be sold outright. If before his death the original pioneer had divided the land between his sons, showing them the boundaries, each son could dispose of his own portion as he liked, though in practice he would offer it to his brothers first from a sense of loyalty to his own kin, more particularly because it had belonged to their common father. A similar rule would hold for every subsequent generation, viz., if each of the preceding generation had divided up the land completely the whole *ng'undu* or *kisese* was held in severalty and, subject to the usual courtesy to his brothers who must first be given the chance to "buy back their father's land", each portion could be disposed of by its owner. But if, in any previous generation, a portion had not been divided up between the sons of a man who had inherited it in severalty no

disposal of it outside that branch of the family was ever possible again; it was subject to the "spiritual ownership" of the founder of that branch. Nowadays the sense of "spiritual ownership", if there ever was one, has its power, and among the modern Kamba the more sophisticated (not yet by any means a majority) hold that if a man has failed to divide his land between his sons they, or a subsequent generation, can do it by arrangement among themselves. The tenure of land in common, based hypothetically on the sense of "spiritual ownership", is giving way to tenure in severalty. The former principle was common tenure by the kinship actually in occupation and, in respect of an *ng'undu*, severalty in user, the individual users being wives. The same applied to cultivated portions of a *kisese*. The modern principle, or the principle which modern thought is tending to adopt, is severalty in tenure, the individual holders being sons of the wives of the previous occupiers of the several portions by reason of their mother's user of them. In this we need see nothing but a more complete development of the patrilineal principle at the expense of the matrilineal, though there can be little doubt that the economic situation and the trend to individualism have speeded up the process. This development, together with the weakening of whatever sense of "spiritual ownership" there may have been, has resulted in the present tendency to recognise the individual's right of outright sale no matter how his ownership or share in ownership arose.

In the minds of most, however, this right is still conditioned by two principles. The first rests on the reversionary rights of kindred and explains the facts sufficiently without invoking "spiritual ownership". When a man dies his nearest patrilineal kin inherit. They have an interest in his land even though the total holding of the kindred may be held in severalty. They can therefore intervene if he tries to sell his portion. In practice this right of intervention operates in two ways. First, he must get permission from his seniors and equals (in generation) in the kindred living on the spot (that is, in general, in the same *utui*), and second, he must offer them the chance

to purchase before accepting any offer from outside. This theory of the power of the potential heirs to intervene, if carried to its logical conclusion, would mean that every kinship in the parent clan, and indeed the tribe, could put a stop to any outright sale, and it is on this theory that the tribal conception of its ultimate concern in the ownership and user of the tribal land depends. But in practice any intervention by relations more remote than those normally in actual residence in the vicinity, if it occurred at all, would be directed to the elders on the spot, that is, the intervener would try to persuade the local kinship to exercise its power of veto. In the case of successive sales of the same piece of land, however, an objection might be lodged direct from a distant area since the local power of control might be slight or non-existent.

Even a close relative on the female side could intervene to stop a sale. Such intervention would have no legal force, but it could be very powerful in practice. In particular the maternal uncle (*inaume*, that is, "male mother"; "my maternal uncle" is *māma*) could, and frequently would, raise objections to a sale which meant eviction of his sister from her cultivation rights. His influence on his nephew was always strong; his objections would be very seriously considered and his generation's equals in the nephew's kin would almost certainly support him. The father-in-law or brother-in-law (*muthoni*) could also intervene on behalf of his daughter or sister or her children.

The other principle which conditions the right of outright sale affords an indirect control and rests on the right of the *utui* elders to refuse permission to any individual to settle in its territory. An intending purchaser could be refused the right of domicile and consequently, unless he was buying for speculation only, would see no profit in proceeding with the purchase. The *utui*, as an independent state, has the right to regulate its population, both in regard to number and to character, by controlling immigration.

As pressure on the land increased the process of hiving off and setting up new homesteads and demarcating new *ng'undu* and *isese* was continued.

It was the sons who searched the *wetu* for cultivable land, and frequently they who set up new *siengo*, demarcated new *isese*, and established new *misyi* on them. There were certain kinship rules which affected the pattern of inheritance in those early days. Generally it was the first-born son (*ikiithathi*) who went out first to find new land. There were two good reasons for this. If a younger son had gone his elder brother could not join him afterwards, whereas younger sons could always join their elder brother and share his *ng'undu* and *kisese*, and the latter would, if there were space available, make provision for them when he chose the land. The other reason was that it was the duty of the last-born son (*ilumaita*) of any woman to stay behind and protect her interests and generally look after her in her old age. He remained as guardian of his mother's portion of the family land when the rest had left it to go and find new land elsewhere. As each brother left in turn the youngest of them added that brother's share, or potential share, to his own and eventually inherited the whole. If his father had only had one wife it meant, on his father's death, that where there had been one man before there was only one man now. The principle therefore operated strongly to prevent an over-fragmentation.

The pattern of land-inheritance was, by reason of this duty of the youngest son, a form of ultimogeniture, rather like borough-English, except that it could be complicated by the practice of polygyny, much more common then than now because (apart from European wars) the death of warriors in battle, raids, and brawls was at a higher rate, and prostitution was not then a rival to a normal married life. (Girls captured by raiding parties added to the brides available but this factor worked both ways.)

I think, however, it would be correct to say that ultimogeniture was the custom rather than the law. It was only possible as long as there was ample land, and even then the youngest son certainly had no legal right to exclude his older brothers. If one of them came back for any reason, possibly having failed to get the sort of land he wanted or having found his new *ng'undu* or

kisese too exposed to enemy attack, he could re-assume his seniority and his share in user. Even if his brothers had settled permanently elsewhere the youngest could not treat the land as entirely unconditioned by their existence. He certainly could not alienate it without their sanction, and certain choice portions, such as a *kianda* (pl. *sianda*), a rich garden especially suitable for sugar-cane and grain-crops, or an *uyau* (pl. *mayau*), an irrigable field, would usually still be subject to the rule of sharing. On the contrary, it may be said that the seed of primogeniture was in the Kamba system and simply waiting for the right environment. The first-born son of the senior wife, if he was old enough on his father's death, assumed his functions in respect of the other sons and was regarded generally as the new head of the family. In regard to property, though all the brothers were theoretically equal, he would frequently award himself a larger share (if his father had not already done so) and his juniors would acquiesce. If he were not yet old enough to undertake the family headship, but had a half-brother (that is, by another of his father's wives) who was, the latter would act as regent and instructor until he could take his rightful place. The present position seems to be half-way between the two, ultimogeniture and primogeniture. Neither the first-born nor the last-born son gets any great advantage in regard to land; all the brothers (sons of one woman) share more or less alike. What will happen in the future is a matter of conjecture; it will probably depend on the situation in regard to land; if further overcrowding means the uprooting of several of the brothers and their engaging in industry outside, it will probably be the senior brother who will stay, and the rule will then be primogeniture. But if ample land of a fair average quality is made available the old custom will probably reassert itself and ultimogeniture prevail; the elders say they still regard it as the proper course, but add that all the brothers would certainly want to settle in the added land and take their mother with them.

Even in the early days the movement of whole families was not unknown. One of the sons

(generally the eldest), having found a particularly good piece of land larger than he himself could use, might persuade his father to leave their former holding, possibly becoming overcrowded and worn out, hemmed in by other families and short of grazing, and go and join him. The father could not settle on the land acquired by any son of his, but he could set up a home, with the assistance of his sons, next door.¹ His former *kisese*, if he had one, would then revert to *wau*, but the original *ng'undu* would remain his family's in perpetuity, which in practice meant for just as long as the local memory of their exclusive right of tenure lasted; if the family wished to retain its hold on the land it would have to leave an agent or one of its members there or jog the memory of the local people by fairly frequent visits.

This matter of land-inheritance by one son only by primogeniture or ultimogeniture is of more than academic interest. Already in several of the Native Lands a position has been reached in which, if the soil is to be saved at all, one family may no longer be replaced by two or more in every generation. Some form of unifamilial succession will be necessary if the land and population balance is to be preserved continuously

¹ There was a custom in regard to settlement in seniorities which is reminiscent of the Kikuyu practice of settlement by ridges. It would appear that in the original agricultural settlements two branches of one kinship group would settle close to one another but on opposite sides of a stream, which would serve them both as a water supply. Later, in the settlement of the *wau*, a man joining his junior in the same kinship could not settle on the same spot with him but would set up home next door, if possible with a stream between the two. When there was no stream this separation by flowing water was effected ritually. A medicine-man (*mundu wa ng'undu*) was called in and he would dig a small ditch along the boundary decided on, assisted by other elders. He would then bring gravel, sand, or pebbles from an actual river bed and put them in the ditch and then pour water in it, declaring it to be a stream. The word used for such an artificial boundary was the same as that for river, stream (*usi*, pl. *mbusi*) or its diminutive (*kalusi*, pl. *tulusi*).

by some method incorporated in the native system rather than by the savage surgery of occasional eviction. Primogeniture would appear to be the one to advocate. Every younger son would know exactly where he stood and would be conditioned from his infancy to an understanding of his situation. The last-born son might be a long time coming, and when he came he might be actually of a different kindred altogether; native opinion may not always tolerate the theory of the parity of natural and fictitious kinship, particularly when the principle that heirship is contingent on a payment to another kin has faded out. The present tendency seems to be towards a recognition of primogeniture; in Kikuyu the principle that it is the duty of the youngest son to stay with his mother is yielding to the principle that the eldest son is his father's natural successor and should, as head of the family, in due course replace him on the family land. This is perhaps nothing but a further manifestation of the increasing emphasis on patrilineal principles, but it is strengthened by the fact that nowadays to leave one's family land is generally to leave the tribal land completely and get a living somewhere else. Where new land is plentiful ultimogeniture prevails, but where there is no new land available primogeniture seems likely to take its place. When beneficial occupation entails absorption of a surplus population in industry outside the tribal land primogeniture would appear to be the most convenient form of succession both from the Government and the African point of view, but when land is added to the tribal land whether as a straight addition to the unit or as a settlement area under immediate control, ultimogeniture would seem to be unobjectionable and might conform more fully to African opinion.

(to be continued)

NOTES OF THE QUARTER

Anglo-French Communications Conference at Dakar. An Anglo-French Communications Conference took place at Dakar from 19 to 26 May 1947. The Conference was attended by technical experts from the Public Works, Posts and Telegraphs and Railway Departments of the four British West African territories: Nigeria, Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and the Gambia, and the French territories of French West Africa, the Cameroons and Equatorial Africa. The British Colonial Office and the Ministry of Overseas France were represented. Portuguese observers were also present. At the final session of the Conference, the delegates adopted resolutions regarding the development or creation of road, rail, telecommunication and radio links between British and French Territories in West Africa, in order to develop commercial relations, and to facilitate the work of fighting the scourges of nature, and through those means to improve the living standards and the general welfare of the West African peoples.

This Conference is evidence of the desire of both France and Britain to collaborate (over colonial matters for co-operative action) in tackling the technical problems that are common to all the West African territories in their care. It will be recalled that an Anglo-French Veterinary Conference was held in Dakar from 9 to 16 May 1946 and an Anglo-French Medical Conference in Accra in November of that year. In November 1945 M. Henri Laurentie, Directeur des Affaires Politiques, was in London for discussions at the Colonial Office, and in June 1946 a delegation for the Belgian Colonial Office visited London for a similar purpose. At the Conference held in Paris 20 to 23 May 1947, between French, Belgian and British delegations, a number of common problems were discussed with the aim of achieving technical co-operation between the three countries. The subjects included nutrition, African disease, soil conservation, animal and plant disease, and medical education.

In this connection it is interesting to note that in March 1947 M. Lamine Gueye, African member

for Senegal in the French Chamber of Deputies, and Mayor of Dakar, visited Sierra Leone where he emphasized the need for regular meetings of French and British Administrators in West Africa, for discussions on the problems confronting them.

* * *

African Studies. The report has recently been published of a Commission presided over by the Earl of Scarborough and appointed by Mr Anthony Eden in 1944, to deal with the whole range of Oriental, Slavonic, East European and African Studies in present conditions. Lord Hailey, commenting on it in the *Times* of 14 June 1947, emphasizes the fact that, although the exact relationship, in the future, of the British people with the peoples of these countries cannot yet be defined, those relationships will rest largely on "mutual understanding derived from the exchange of knowledge regarding our civilization and theirs". It is important, therefore, that facilities for the study of language and cultural background be made available both to those British peoples who are working in the countries concerned and to the indigenous leaders with whom they will be in partnership in that work; for this exchange of knowledge must be regarded as no longer a matter merely of individual interest but of national concern, an essential factor in the future history of mankind.

Attention is drawn in the report to pioneer efforts already being made at Universities and at specialized institutions. The valuable work of the International African Institute is mentioned, and also the important benefaction of the Rockefeller Institute which made possible the addition of a Department of African Studies to the School of Oriental Studies.

Broadly outlined, the recommendations of the Commission are that the scope of these specialized institutions and university departments be such that, where necessary, personnel of the business world as well as personnel of the missionary world and Government Services can be adequately equipped for work abroad, and that State aid should be increased in support of this.

In the Colonial field the particular interest attaching to the report is largely in the sections dealing with African Studies. Both the study of Languages, of which there are at least 700 in Africa, and Regional Studies which comprise History, Geography, Economics, Government, Anthropology, Sociology, and Ethnology, are included under the title "African Studies". It is expected that the growth of higher education in Africa will be a means of providing more much needed research centres there; meanwhile the Commission recommends the immediate planning of comprehensive programmes of study in institutions in Britain.

* * *

Annals of Social Anthropology is the name of a new journal to be published by the Association of Social Anthropologists recently formed in Great Britain. The aims and objects of the Association are as set out hereunder :

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE, 1947

President :

Prof. A. R. RADCLIFFE-BROWN

Chairman and Hon. Secretary :

Prof. E. E. EVANS-PRITCHARD

Committee :

Prof. RAYMOND FIRTH, Prof. C. DARYLL FORDE,
Dr. MEYER FORTES

The Association was founded on 23 July 1946, in response to the general opinion among social anthropologists in Great Britain that the subject has reached a stage of development warranting the establishment of a professional organization. Its aims are :—

(1) To promote the study and teaching of social anthropology as a specialized branch of anthropology ; (2) to represent the interests and maintain the professional standards of the subject ; (3) to arrange periodic conferences of the members of the Association ; and (4) to secure publication of researches under its auspices.

It is intended that a journal, *Annals of Social Anthropology*, be published as soon as arrangements can be made.

Membership of the Association is limited to persons holding, or having held, a teaching or research appointment in Social Anthropology, and is strictly by invitation of the Officers and Committee of the Association.

LIST OF MEMBERS, JANUARY 1947

ELKIN, A. D., M.A., PH.D., Professor of Anthropology, University of Sydney.

ELWIN, VERRIER, D.S.C., Anthropological Survey of India.

EVANS-PRITCHARD, E. E., M.A., PH.D., Professor of Social Anthropology, University of Oxford.

FIRTH, RAYMOND, M.A., PH.D., Professor of Anthropology in the University of London (L.S.E.)

FORDE, C. DARYLL, PH.D., Professor of Anthropology in the University of London (University College).

FORTES, MEYER, M.A., PH.D., Reader in Social Anthropology, University of Oxford.

FORTUNE, R. F., M.A., PH.D., Director, Anthropological Survey of Burma.

GLUCKMAN, MAX, B.A. (HONS.), D.PHIL., Director, Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, N. Rhodesia.

HOGGIN, H. IAN, M.A., PH.D., Senior Lecturer in Anthropology, University of Sydney.

HUTTON, J. H., C.I.E., D.S.C., Professor of Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge.

JENNESS, DIAMOND, M.A., HON.LITT.D., Ethnologist, National Museum of Canada.

KABERRY, MISS PHYLLIS M., M.A., PH.D., Research Fellow, International African Institute.

KUPER, MRS H., B.A., PH.D., formerly Senior Lecturer in Social Anthropology, University of the Witwatersrand.

LEACH, E. R., M.A., Lecturer in Anthropology, University of London (L.S.E.).

LITTLE, K. L., M.A., PH.D., Lecturer in Anthropology, University of London (L.S.E.).

MAIR, MISS LUCY, M.A., PH.D., Lecturer in Colonial Administration, University of London.

MEEK, C. K., M.A., D.S.C., Senior Research Fellow, Brasenose College, Oxford.

NADEL, S. F., PH.D., Lecturer in Anthropology, University of London (L.S.E.).

PERISTIANY, J. G., D.PHIL., Lecturer in Social Anthropology, University of London (University College).

PIDDINGTON, RALPH, M.A., PH.D., Reader in Social Anthropology, University of Edinburgh.

RADCLIFFE-BROWN, A. R., M.A., Emeritus Professor, University of Oxford.

RICHARDS, MISS AUDREY I., M.A., PH.D., Reader in Anthropology, University of London (L.S.E.).

SCHAPER, I., M.A., PH.D., D.SC., Professor of Anthropology, University of Cape Town.

SELIGMAN, MRS BRENDA Z.

SMITH, REV. E. W., D.D., Editor of *Africa*.

STANNER, W. E. H., M.A., PH.D., Director (designate), Makerere Institute of Social Research, Uganda.

WILSON, MRS MONICA, M.A., PH.D., Professor of Bantu Studies, Rhodes University College, Grahamstown, South Africa.

* *

Another new periodical, a quarterly, called **Human Relations**, also makes its appearance. This journal is the joint product of the Research Centre for Group Dynamics of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, U.S.A., and of the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, London, England. "The journal will be organized to function as an experimental institution . . . and will seek to encourage the development of an integrated approach in the social sciences, and is intended to supplement more specialized journals. . . . The contents of *Human Relations* will deal with work done in any country. . . . It is proposed to pattern this content of the journal

in such a way as to achieve a balance between these following types of contribution :

"1. Reports on original research with full supporting data, methodological problems being stressed wherever they form an important aspect of the investigation. 2. Formulation and discussion of new concepts, arising from practical needs or field work. 3. Studies of emerging social forms and institutions, including contributions dealing with various forms of social research institute in relation to society. 4. Appreciations of current legislative or administrative problems from the social science point of view. 5. Reviews of special fields of work, with annotated bibliographies to facilitate international exchange of knowledge. 6. Descriptions of new techniques in social science. 7. Reviews of books. 8. Notes on current research."

The annual subscription is 35s., payable to *Human Relations*, Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, 2, Beaumont St., London, W.I.

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We welcome the re-appearance of **Makerere**, the Magazine of Makerere College, Uganda. The Makerere College Magazine suspended publication in 1941, due to wartime conditions. It now appears in a slightly different form and with a wider appeal.

Makerere is the only college for higher education in East Africa for African students. The aim is to make the magazine the first literary paper written by Africans in English. The Magazine appears thrice yearly, and the annual subscription is 2s. 6d., payable to the Editor, Makerere College, Kampala, Uganda.

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Calabar. D. M. McFARLAN. (1946.) 183 pp. and Map.

Calabar is published to commemorate the Centenary of the Church of Scotland Mission 1846–1946 at Calabar, Southern Nigeria. Though there is a list of illustrations there is no “Table of Contents”. There is an index.

Reading this book on the origin of the Scottish Mission at Calabar, one gains the impression that the initiative to open a Mission at this particular place came from Scotland thus, after the members of the Scottish Mission in Jamaica had kindled the idea of a Mission to West Africa—nowhere in particular—the request, after being frowned upon, was taken up by the Scottish Mission in Scotland. “By the hand of Captain Turner they sent formal proposals to the Chiefs of Calabar to settle their Mission there.” Whereas the initiative, so far as Calabar is concerned, came from the Africans themselves. “1842 . . . King Eyumba V of Duke Town and Eyo of Creek Town wrote to England asking for missionaries to come out ‘and teach them how to make sugar from sugar cane, etc.’” (TALBOT, P.A., *Southern Nigeria*, Oxford, 1926. Vol. I, p.193).

Speaking of twin murder the author writes: “But the end of twin murder is not yet, though the work of the pioneers stamped it out long ago in Calabar itself”. I am afraid this is wishful thinking. When last in Calabar in 1945, I made enquiries about twin birth. I was assured that no twins are born in Calabar. “Efik women don’t do that sort of thing.” Yet the incidence of twin births to singletons among the Ibibio is higher than the one in eighty ratio for Europeans.

The original town of Itu was on the left bank of the Cross River.

The remark by a trader that trade gin “was absolutely and literally poison” has never been borne out by laboratory analysis. If trade gin were “literally poison” the trade in it could have been stopped under the food or the market ordinances.

Government attempted, by propaganda, to discredit illicit alcohol distilling by calling it poison of the “rot-gut” variety. Samples sent to the

Government analyst, Lagos, were reported as “good quality alcohol”.

The treaties of 1878 were by no means the first. The treaties of 1850 and of 1856 were all on similar lines but were treated by the Chiefs as “Scraps of paper”.

The saving of twins creates a problem which is not mentioned, because no solution has been reached. No one will marry a twin of either sex. They have no inheritance in family land or property. They are still completely and utterly outcasts.

If *Etubom* is literally “master of the canoe”, then what is *Ikwaibum*, “the matchet of the canoe”? *Etubom* does not mean “master of the canoe”, *bom* means great, almighty.

One is surprised that a missionary of the author’s standing should still confuse a “juju priest” with witchcraft, thus “cunningly they (the juju priests) infested the paths along which the missionary travelled with jujus to harm her, until they realized the impotence of their witchcraft”. To practise witchcraft one has to be a witch. The “juju priest” is the witch doctor, the avowed enemy of witchcraft and of witches. If in the above sentence “magic” replaces “witchcraft” all is well.

The description of Mr Cruikshank’s part in the Oku-Ikorofiong fracas was a little different in reality. In attempting to subdue the rioting he placed himself between the combatants and was accidentally hit on the head, rendered unconscious and was carried away by the women. This accidental injury to Cruikshank ended the rioting.

One often hears of the ingratitude of the African, but it is pleasant to record that in carrying the Mission loads from Amelu to Uburu for a hospital the voluntary, unpaid labour walked “eight times round the world”.

The leper colony at Itu is laid out on an old neolithic, stone-age site. Polished stone implements can be found there.

Dr Hitchcock’s death is attributed to malaria plus sunstroke. I was under the impression that the medical profession no longer speak of sunstroke but of heatstroke,

The statement of death by *esere* bean poisoning, that the victim "died in fearful agony", does not fit the two cases I have seen die. Poisoning of the motor centres with paralysis of motor muscles, including the diaphragm, is the cause of death.

The above criticisms do not detract from the value of the book as an additional historical record of the Calabar and surrounding provinces. Memories are short on the coast. I do not ever remember hearing of Mr. and Mrs. Ludwigs during my many years of service in the Calabar province, nor had I come across any record of the destruction of Old Town by the Consul. In 1776 Old Town was destroyed by an act of treachery involving the European traders in the hulks, and earlier still, Calabar was gutted by the pirate Black Douglas.

It was also of interest to read that when Hope Waddell first arrived, palm oil, though stored in puncheons, was not loaded in puncheons but in bulk, "palm oil which was poured puncheon by puncheon into the trading vessels".

I have a later record of palm oil being similarly loaded at Bonny in 1851.

The use of galvanized iron appears early because Hope Waddell when he arrived in Calabar saw, according to the author, Eyambe's "palace" roofed with galvanized iron. The year was 1846 and the first patent for making galvanized iron was taken out only in 1837.

Although Ikpe was low lying and hence unhealthy, yet only four miles away was Ududu Ikpe on the edge of an escarpment rising four hundred feet above the hot, steaming valley of the Enyong. Mary Slessor did try Ududu Ikpe but had to abandon it.

The date of the first use of the injection method for the treatment of yaws is of great interest. The greatest number of injections in one year is held by a Government doctor with 80,000.

This little book—it should have been longer—gives an excellent summary of the Scottish Mission's work and influence. Had the book been longer there would have been space in which to sketch in the background of the history of Government activities. As it is, one gains the idea that there was little else in Calabar than the Mission.

The fact that Beecroft explored the Cross River in 1842 is not mentioned until a long list of explorations by Missionaries is first catalogued. Coulthurst went up the Cross River in 1832 and disappeared.

No mention is made of the explorations of Roger Casement who reached Ikot Obong and Ibiaku, and was driven back with the loss of his loads long before any missionary reached them.

The book can confidently be recommended to readers as giving a history of Calabar from the the Missionary outlook.

My experience of the Calabar province is that the presence of Missionary influence meant a decrease in crimes of violence, and a dawn of better days, emancipation from the dread of the Ekpo society.

M. D. W. JEFFREYS.

Studies in African Native Law. JULIUS LEWIN.
(Cape Town: The African Bookman. 1947.)
174 pp. 15s.

In his preface the author states that his main academic interest is the relation of law to the social sciences. This is clear from his writing. Each one of the essays reveals that he is ever conscious of the social, economic and political background to legal questions and it is this consciousness which makes this work of such great importance to all concerned with the framing of Native policies in Africa.

It is refreshing to find a lawyer who stresses that law, although of major importance, is but one agency of social control. In an excessively "law-minded" state such as South Africa this emphasis has particular value. Reporting Mr Lewin's evidence to the Native Laws Commission of Enquiry in March 1947, Johannesburg newspapers made use of the head-line "Natives must be educated to respect the rule of law". In one of his essays the author develops this point and shows that it is only by just treatment of the African in spheres other than the strictly or formally legal, that such respect can be encouraged.

It is to the law, however, both in its framing and in its administration, that one must look for the preservation of these "principles of natural justice"

which Western democracy prizes so greatly. Hence the importance of the problems which are raised in these studies.

Introducing his collected essays the author poses three questions :

"What is the relation of Native Law to the Common Law of the country, especially on the same subject ?"

"Can Native Law be developed to keep pace with the changing conditions of Native society ?"

"What is the future of Native Law in South Africa ?"

It is possible that one question might have been substituted for these three—is a policy of legal segregation possible within the bounds of a single state ? Theoretically, of course, such a policy is feasible but it does seem that it could only function in a state where complete territorial, economic, social and political segregation is practised. In South Africa segregation has never taken this form and any attempt to enforce the policy on these lines would lead to general economic collapse. The European and African are economically interdependent and the African fills an essential place, in industry and commerce.

The process of "culture contact" is therefore in full operation and with the passing years, increasing numbers of Africans come into direct contact with the dominant European culture, and receive the stimulus of new ideas and practices. The impact of European administration, religion, commerce and technology has led inevitably to the disruption of traditional tribal institutions. The author states : "Nowhere is the process more vividly reflected than in the special courts to which the Natives bring their legal disputes". From his analysis of the problems of Native marriage, divorce, inheritance and contract which have come before the courts, the truth of this statement becomes apparent.

The further effects of this "contact" become clear when the problem of the conflict of laws is considered. The essay "The Conflict of Tribal Laws" shows that the problem is not simply one of a unified "Native Law" conflicting with the Common or "European Law". Nor is it a question of dealing with a unified "Sotho" and "Nguni

Law". The numerous tribes have different customs and, with Africans showing an increasing tendency to travel and marry away from their traditional homes, the whole problem of legal interpretation becomes more complicated and more confused. This is revealed by the conflict of opinion between the courts of first instance, and the superior courts on questions of domicile raised in the *lobolo* cases which are quoted.

In addition, the thesis that the Union Government's attempt to recognize, simplify and cheapen Native litigation has failed, seems to be fully substantiated. The rules of procedure for Native courts are shown to be inadequate ; the increasing use of attorneys and the frequent appeals on points of law make clear the fact that a theoretically simple procedure does not reduce the cost of litigation for the African. In some instances flagrant injustice may result from the application of Native Law as is shown by the "damages" example quoted. "When a black man's stallion is injured by a black man's cow, there is no legal redress because Native custom applies ; when, however, a white man's stallion is injured by a black man's cow, there is legal redress available to the injured party because the Common law applies!"

Mr Lewin, however, is not content with diagnosing the present ills of Native Law. He prescribes possible cures which include the training of administrators in sociological jurisprudence, the framing of adequate rules of procedure, the development of a satisfactory system for recording proceedings in Native courts and the building up of a unified system of Native law. The need for flexibility is stressed, as it must be when one keeps in mind the constantly changing conditions of Native Society in Africa.

As to the question of the future of Native Law in South Africa one feels tempted to assert that Native Law must give way ultimately to a Common Law applicable to all citizens of South Africa. For the present, however, it is obvious that the above reforms must take place before further progress is achieved.

It is of interest to note that Mr Arthur Phillips' excellent "Report on Native Tribunals" prepared

for the Kenya Government lends full support to Mr Lewin's principal contentions. Certainly the problems raised in this volume are not restricted to South Africa and these studies will be read with profit by all who are interested in the future development of African territories.

Being a collection of articles published previously in a number of different journals, this book has a certain degree of repetition. This fact, however, does not detract in any way from the merit of the volume as a whole, as the repetition of a problem or opinion in a different context serves to emphasize its importance. From the point of view of the student of African affairs, one feels that the publication of these collected essays was long overdue. The relative inaccessibility of law reports and the difficulty of understanding legal technicalities make the two last chapters, on *lobolo* and inheritance cases, particularly valuable.

K. KIRKWOOD.

Essai de Grammaire Tsogo. Abbé ANDRE WALKER. (Brazzaville: Inst. d'Etudes Centrafricaines. 1946.) 64 pp.

Tsogo is a language of the Omyene group of North-western Bantu, and is allied to Mpongwe. The little book before us is a mere outline of the grammatical elements—all treated in an un-Bantu way, according to the significance of their counterparts in French. For instance the work starts off with an exposition of "Le genre", and after stating: "Il n'y a pas de genre masculin et de genre féminin", proceeds to show how sex distinction is achieved. The noun classification is totally out-of-date, classes 1, 2, 3, and 4, for instance, being put together as "Classe I". The *vi-* to diminutive forms are not numbered with the classes, but added separately. [Incidentally, a plural to the infinitive class (p. 17, e.g. *ebèa*, la maladie; *mabèa*, les maladies) is a very interesting form.] Rules of nasalization are not worked out. The system of numeration, while developing to a decimal one, is basically quinary. The treatment of "pronoms indéfinis" (pp. 34-5), "les participes présents et passés" (pp. 47-8, "adverbes" and

"prépositions", is all totally foreign to the genius of a Bantu language.

It is a pity that Bantu grammatical studies should still be put out in this way.

C. M. D.

Bantoe Filosofie. FR. P. PLACIED TEMPELS, O.F.M. (Antwerp).

When we speak of Greek Philosophy, or German or English Philosophy, we refer to the recorded and published works of Greeks, Germans or Englishmen who have set themselves to reflect upon their experience, uncover its presuppositions, and determine the ultimate nature of reality, of truth, and of the values which they and their associates recognize and observe. We are justified in prefixing a national adjective to Philosophy because no man's thought can be divorced entirely from his practical life, and everyman's practical life is a product of his social environment and is permeated by the national traditions of the society in which he lives. But for these facts, Philosophy is not Greek or German, Russian or English, European or Oriental, and can no more be nationalized than can be science or truth. But when Fr. Tempels speaks of Bantu Philosophy he means something quite different. He is not speaking of any philosophy that any African has ever thought out or expressed, but simply of the systematic (and Fr. Tempels claims that it is systematic) body of presuppositions lying logically behind the common forms of speech, custom and belief, which are current among the Bantu. Whether it is legitimate to call the statement of the presuppositions of a people's practices, analyzed and expounded by one who is foreign to them in tradition, religion and culture, *their* philosophy, or to call it philosophy at all, may be questioned. In a sense, of course, every man who is capable of thinking is a philosopher, and every man's habits and convictions presuppose a metaphysic (the difference between the ordinary man and the sage is one of degree and not of kind), and someone else may reveal to a man the presuppositions of his beliefs and conduct. But would that be the revelation of *his* philosophy or the philosophical interpretation of his life by the other man?

Be that as it may, Fr. Tempels has embarked on a fascinating study in his attempt to state systematically the logical presuppositions of Bantu thought and practice, and one which (so far as it is accurate) cannot fail to be of immense value to missionaries, teachers and those whose business it is to understand the African, and help him to adjust himself to the impacts of Western culture.

It is not necessary to summarize the entire statement of Fr. Tempels's book, for the principle of the whole system is contained in what we may call its ontological concept (what he calls "*de wezenopvatting der Bantu*"). He maintains that the fundamental concept of being is that of force or power ("*kracht*"). "Beings", therefore, are "powers", and are thought and spoken of as such by the Bantu. They are not mutually independent, but one can act upon—weaken or strengthen—another, or act in opposition to it. According to Fr. Tempels, these forces are ranked, as it were, in order of seniority: there is a supreme force, the Creator, who shared its own life-force originally with the first ancestors, and they are thus the highest link between God and their descendants. Between the living members of the tribe and the original ancestors all the descendants range in order of seniority, including those alive at the present time. Among these again, a living person has power over his own land and the animals, plants, etc., upon it. The animals, plants and minerals are themselves forces of lower rank or power than living people.

There are, according to Fr. Tempels, three ways in which forces can affect one another: (i) a person (living or dead) can decrease or increase the being or power of another person by direct action; (ii) personal forces can affect lower (or less powerful) forces (i.e. animals, vegetables or inanimate objects) directly; and (iii) personal forces can affect one another through the medium of lower (or lesser) forces (animate or inanimate). The influence of one force upon another is always from the stronger to the weaker (senior to junior), and if ever it seems otherwise, the apparently efficacious weaker is being used as a medium by a stronger to influence another, equal or junior to

itself. In like manner the effect of a strong force can be counteracted if another equally strong (or more so) can be employed against it.

Fr. Tempels explains the evidence (outer and inner) on which these concepts of force and influence are taken to rest, and develops from these basic conceptions the "psychology" or theory of personality of the Bantu, and their Ethics.

How useful a knowledge of all this can be in regulating relations between "civilized and "uncivilized" in Africa, the author discusses and explains in his final chapter.

The value of a work such as this, depends upon its accuracy as an interpretation of Bantu beliefs, and judgement upon that can be passed only by the anthropologist. It would be the part of a philosopher to criticize the system and its concepts as a *philosophy*, and such criticism could hardly be appropriate, for Fr. Tempels does not put it forward as a statement of what he believes to be the truth, but only of what the Bantu believe. We should, in other words, raise two questions: (i) Is it a correct statement of Bantu belief?—which is the question for the anthropologist; and (ii) As a conception of the Real, is it tenable?—and that is a question for the philosopher.

To discuss the second would be scarcely fruitful. It could have no effect upon the Bantu—who have not themselves entered the philosophic arena—and Fr. Tempels is not concerned in his book with the *validity* of "Bantu Philosophy". If he were, he would discuss the concept of force, and the meaning of the term; he would tell us whether it is the old physical conception of force that is intended, or some spiritual power—if spiritual, again, in what sense a force. Without such a criticism of the fundamental conception of this alleged philosophy, the whole system is philosophically well-nigh meaningless.

The first question, however, is more important, and its discussion demands a study of the evidence for these beliefs. That is a task too large to be attempted in this review, and one which the reviewer is not competent to undertake. Certain remarks, however, seem warranted. If Fr. Tempels is right, we should expect to find a common word in the Bantu languages signifying "force" or

"power" applied in all the various references he alleges, and possibly a common root traceable in all or most Bantu languages with a similar connotation. On this point there seems to be division of opinion among authorities,¹ although evidence for the existence of such a root is not altogether lacking. Supposing it were adequate, however, it is a further question whether or not the conception is Bantu in origin.² Further, such evidence as does exist seems to point to the root *anga* or *nga* to indicate some such idea as "force" or "power", or (less comprehensively) the stuff through which magic works. But this root is not present in the words used for the Supreme Being or Creator, and the "force" conceived as His is usually regarded by the Bantu as quite different from that which is signified by the root *nga*. The results of research³ on this matter seem to suggest that the

roots used for "Creator" are traceable to an Egyptian derivation, which can be explained by culture contact.

The belief in the influence of "forces" upon one another is certainly well established in the realm of magic, but there is hardly the same evidence that it is generally held by the Bantu outside the sphere of the witch-doctor's esoteric rites. The Bantu, however, have notorious faith in magic and the witch-doctor, and beliefs attributable to him might be alleged generally of the Bantu, but only in the same sense as Roman Catholic dogma accepted by the people on the authority of the Church, might be regarded as the "philosophy" of the Catholic layman.

That there is a place for an analysis of the beliefs of African tribes in the body of anthropological teaching cannot be doubted, and the contribution made by Fr. Tempels is not inconsiderable. It must be encouraging, moreover, to the professional anthropologist to find a missionary making the attempt to study scientifically the indigenous beliefs of the people whom he wishes to convert.

E. E. HARRIS.

¹ See E. Clodd, *Magic in Names* (London, 1920); E. W. Smith and A. M. Dale, *The Ila speaking peoples of Northern Rhodesia*, Vol. II, (London, 1920); C. M. Doke, *The Lambas of Northern Rhodesia* (London, 1931); etc.

² See Budge, *Egyptian Magic* (London, 1899).

³ See A. H. Keane, *Man, past and present* (Cambridge, 1920), and C. K. Meek, *A Sudanese Kingdom* (London, 1931).